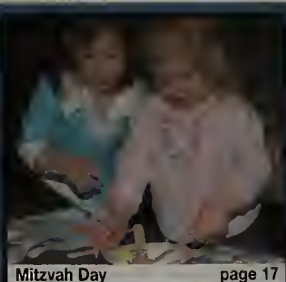


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Mitzvah Day

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Ambassador Baker debunks the myth of Israeli apartheid

By Michael Regenstreif

Israel Week, a week-long series of events at the University of Ottawa and Carleton University, began February 4 at uOttawa with a talk by Alan Baker, Israel's ambassador to Canada.

Baker's publicized topic was "Israel: The only democracy in the Middle East." Explaining Israeli democracy to the standing-room-only crowd, he also debunked the myth of Israeli apartheid and attacked the very idea of Israeli Apartheid Week on campus.

"I want to explain to you what an absurdity Israeli Apartheid Week is," the ambassador told the assembled students. Calling the week "intellectually dishonest" and the "antithesis" of what should be taught in a university, Baker said the week was "an attempt by a small group to manipulate students" and "a celebration of ignorance."

Baker described Israel as a liberal democracy with a parliamentary and legal system similar to Canada's.

"The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms," he said, "is a source for Israeli norms."

In debunking the idea that Israel is an apartheid state, Baker pointed out that equality of rights for all Israelis, including Arabs, has been entrenched in Israel since its Declaration of Indepen-

dence. He specified that Arabs vote in Israeli elections, are represented in the Knesset – there are three Arab political parties with members in the Israeli parliament – and in the cabinet and on the Israeli Supreme Court. And Arabic is fully recognized as an official language in Israel.

Baker delineated the full range of rights and freedoms enjoyed by all citizens – Jews, Arabs, Christians, Muslims, Baha'i – including freedoms of speech, the press, assembly and religion.

In the area of religious law, Baker said Israel recognizes sharia law for Muslims, rabbinical law for Jews and canon courts for Christians.

Baker also pointed out that the equality rights enjoyed by Arabs in Israel are not afforded to Jews in many Arab countries.

"Jordan does not permit citizenship for Jews," he said, "and Jews cannot own property in many Arab countries."

As well, Baker revealed that many Arab gays and lesbians, persecuted in their own countries, actually seek shelter in Israel.

Baker dismissed descriptions of its security barrier as an "apartheid wall."

The barrier, he said, is "a temporary measure to prevent the infiltration of suicide bombers"

(Continued on page 2)



Combatting genocide in Darfur

Yoni Levitan reports on his trip to the internally displaced person camp in Rumrol, Sudan (page 7).

Richard Warman combats spread of hatred on the Internet

By Rubin Friedman

In 1998-99, while working for B'nai Brith Canada in Ottawa, I learned of, and had contact with, a grass roots anti-tax movement with a disturbing tendency toward conspiracy thinking, some of which involved fears of "the Rothschild nation."

At times, the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* was quoted as "proof" of this grand conspiracy. As I learned more about it, I realized that this way of thinking was

wide spread in smaller towns, among some members of the environmental movement and among those involved in New Age thinking and activities.

Eldon Warman in Alberta was one of the anti-tax activists who said particularly nasty things about Jews on the web. Imagine my surprise, then, when someone named 'Warman' called and offered to work with me in combating hatred.

When I heard his name, I was

immediately suspicious. But it turned out this was Richard Warman, a young lawyer who already had contacts with B'nai Brith and Canadian Jewish Congress in Toronto.

We soon met to discuss the impending visit to Canada of David Icke, a former spokesperson for the Green Party in Britain, and now a self-proclaimed prophet of the New Age, preaching the conspiracy theory to end all conspira-

(Continued on page 2)

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Baker speaks bluntly at uOttawa

(Continued from page 1)

that will be removed when Israel no longer has to deal with the ongoing threat of terrorism.

"No democratic country is perfect," said Baker.

Referring to the recently published findings of the Winograd Commission on the Second Lebanon War, Baker said, "We examine ourselves and we publish the findings."

Although Baker was on campus to talk with students, the question-and-answer period was dominated by exchanges with two non-students in attendance.

Tysecer Aboulnasr, a professor of electrical engineering at uOttawa, defended Israeli Apartheid Week and said students should be free to hear that perspective. Aboulnasr, who grew up in Egypt and has acted as a spokesperson for the Canadian Muslim Network, said that comparisons with



Ambassador Alan Baker debunks the myth of Israeli apartheid at uOttawa.
(OJB photo: Michael Regenstreif)

various Arab countries are irrelevant and should not be a factor in discussions of how Israel deals with Palestinians.

The ambassador was also confronted by Campbell Robertson, an activist with Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME).

Despite their idealistic-sounding name, a visit to the CJPME website reveals an organization with a well-defined anti-Israel agenda.

Robertson claimed Israel committed "ethnic cleansing" in 1948 and cited anti-Zionist Israeli histo-

rian Ilan Pappé as his source for the accusation.

The ambassador dismissed both the suggestion and the credibility of Pappé's research.

"There is Ilan Pappé on one side and hundreds of other Israeli historians on the other," he said.

Israel Week was organized by the Jewish Students Association (JSA) as a counter to "Israeli Apartheid Week" organized by Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights (SPHR) and Not In Our Name (NION). Events for both weeks overlapped on the two campuses.

Warman to speak on racism and anti-Semitism March 3

(Continued from page 1)

cy theories. Everything that happened in the world was really the result of a huge struggle, in ancient times, between good aliens and bad aliens. The bad aliens were really giant shape-shifting lizards who included Richard Nixon, Brian Mulroney, the Royal Family, etc.

At first, he seemed to be a harmless crank, but one of the conspiracy theories Icke drew on was the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and many individuals he suspected of being lizards included the Rothschilds and the Rothschild nation. He was drawing large crowds, selling large numbers of books and was a hero of a growing grass roots movement.

Warman walked into my office, the perfect image of a skinhead. It turned out he was a former candidate for the Green Party of Canada and was concerned about Icke's continuing claim of connection to the Greens and of his apparent influence over some current Green members.

From that moment on, we co-operated in simply faxing extracts from Icke's books, web site and speeches to people in Ottawa. To our pleasant surprise, every property manager who received a copy of the material in Ottawa, either from us or from someone else, cancelled Icke's reservation on their own.

Since that time, Warman has gone on to lodge 15 individual complaints with the Canadian Human Rights Commission against neo-Nazis and white supremacists for spreading hatred on the Internet against Jews, blacks, homosexuals and others.

In nine cases, his complaints have led to the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal shutting down hate-filled websites.

He has had a tremendous impact and the jurisprudence from his cases shows, definitively, that hatred, originating in Canada and spread on the Internet, is subject to Canadian law.

Some of his enemies have

called for his death. And he isn't even Jewish.

"I'm a WASP from a small town in Ontario," Warman will say if asked. And, in fact, he looks more *Aryan* than many of his racist opponents.

Some defenders of free speech say he goes too far. But, to me, he is young man who has put himself and his finances on the line in the bravest way to make sure Canadian values prevail.

In 2007, Richard Warman received the Canadian Jewish Congress Saul Hayes Human Rights Award for his efforts.

Rubin Friedman has used education to fight racism and is the anti-racism project co-ordinator for Jewish Family Services.

For further insight on the work of Richard Warman and Rubin Friedman, you can attend "Fighting Racism and Anti-Semitism: Rubin Friedman in conversation with Richard Warman" on Monday, March 3 at 7:30 pm. at the SJCC.

Publisher's note

Changes at the Bulletin

As many readers of the *Ottawa Jewish Bulletin* know, Barry Fishman was diagnosed with ALS. He has been courageously dealing with the illness while continuing to serve as editor of the *Bulletin*. Unfortunately, he is no longer able to continue to fulfil all his duties and he has gone on disability.

Barry still wishes to remain involved in the Jewish community and with the newspaper that he dearly loves. We have appointed him editor emeritus, a position he will fill on a voluntary basis. He will continue to remain involved in helping to put the paper together and will write articles or editorials when he is able.

Michael Regenstreif has been appointed acting editor of the *Ottawa Jewish Bulletin*.

Michael joined the *Bulletin* as assistant editor in the summer of 2007 and has been a valued member of the team. We are delighted to have Michael assuming this important new role.

The staffs of the *Ottawa Jewish Bulletin* and the Jewish Federation of Ottawa stand in awe of the tremendous courage and dedication Barry Fishman has shown.

We look forward to his continued guidance, leadership and passion in his new role for many years to come.

— Mitchell Bellman, Publisher

Moroccan-style Shabbat at Beth Shalom

By Esther Shetzer, for Beth Shalom

Despite a raging blizzard that made driving treacherous on February 1, more than 150 guests braved the elements to enjoy a lovely Kabalat Shabbat service followed by a delicious Shabbat dinner at Congregation Beth Shalom.

Central to the evening's Moroccan theme was the meal, lovingly prepared by Muriel Benlolo featuring her unique recipes. Guests were treated to an array of tasty Moroccan appetizers including spicy harissa, salmon smothered in green olives, Israeli salad, and eggplant. The main course featured a delectable couscous with dried fruit and baked chicken.

Ambassador Alan Baker of Israel and Ambassador Mohamed Tangi of the Kingdom of Morocco were among the invited guests who enjoyed the dinner. The two ambassadors addressed the audience between courses and both stressed positive aspects of the relationship between the two communities.

Baker quoted the Biblical saying, "henei nua tav u ma'naim shevet achim gom yachad," expressing his happiness at being able to share a meal with his Moroccan counterpart. This was, apparently, the first time the two ambassadors had sat down together.

Tangi talked about the historical importance of the Jewish community in Morocco and described how some of the greatest Jewish



Moroccan Ambassador Mohamed Tangi

philosophers and scholars lived securely in Morocco over the centuries. Today the country has a Jewish population of 5,000. The ambassador invited all Jews to visit Jewish historical sites referring to them as "the treasures of Morocco."

The two ambassadors embraced and later joined in a spontaneous dance with Cantor Daniel Benlolo who was instrumental in bringing the dignitaries to the event.

Best wishes to Beth Shalom were extended by Mount Royal MP Irwin Cotler who also enjoyed the Shabbat dinner.

The Congregation Beth Shalom Shabbat Dinner series continues on March 7. Call the shul office at 613-789-3501 for information.

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In new film, Down syndrome is no obstacle to prayer

By Rebecca Wolfson
NEW YORK (JTA) – Lior Lieblich davens everywhere: in the backyard, in school and on the swing set.

Some congregants at his Philadelphia synagogue, Mishkan Shalom, call him the "little rebbe."

"The Zohar tells stories of miracle children who were spiritual geniuses," one synagogue member said. "Well, that's what Lior is."

Lior is the 13-year-old featured in the new documentary *Praying with Lior*, which highlights the Bar Mitzvah of a Jewish child living with Down syndrome.

The character study of this charming boy tells of how Lior's community successfully integrates him into communal life – a challenge many Jewish communities face with mentally and physically disabled members.

Several Jewish institutions, including the Union for Reform Judaism, run programs to improve service to the Jewish disabled, but experts say most Jewish

institutions do not do enough to meet their physical, religious and social needs.

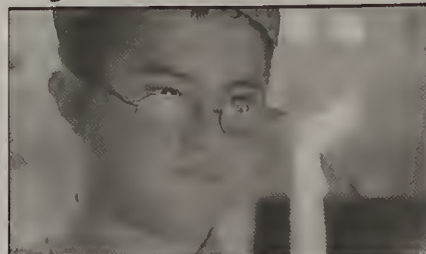
"There are people sitting on the outside who desperately want to come in," said Shelly Christensen, the co-chairwoman of a Reform task force that creates "inclusion committees" for disabled Jews in synagogues, community centers and other Jewish institutions.

While the Jewish community has made progress in recent years, Christensen said, it still has a long way to go in providing disabled members with places to pray, learn and participate.

Down syndrome is of particular concern to Ashkenazim, who are predisposed to the disease; approximately one in 27 carries the gene for Down syndrome.

In *Praying with Lior*, producer and director Ilana Trachtman follows the teenager from his pre-Bar Mitzvah haircut to the *bimah* and beyond, checking back with him two years later.

Though he struggles with



Lior Lieblich, who is featured in the new film "Praying with Lior," says he has "Up" syndrome, not Down syndrome. (SOURCE: First Run Features)

baseball and schoolwork, Lior is able to pray with sincerity, a feat encouraged by those close to him.

Like Lior's Reconstructionist community, the children and teachers at Lior's Orthodox day school admire and accept him.

"There is no such thing as a disabled soul," Besie Katz, the principal of that school, the Politz Hebrew Academy, told JTA in an interview.

Katz said the students at Politz accepted Lior because, while they understood that he had certain limitations, he also had strengths.

of Jewish opportunities for their disabled children.

Now those kids are adults, with some participating in Keshet's transition program for 18- to 22-year-olds. It sets up participants with jobs if they are able to work, and provides recreational programming for young adults.

Orot and Keshet's biggest challenge, like many Jewish organizations dedicated to inclusion, is funding, organizers say.

They have been helped somewhat by Americans' growing awareness of people with disabilities, which in turn has raised the consciousness of the issue in the Jewish community.

Birthright Israel and the National Jewish Council for the Disabled, which is part of the Orthodox Union, run a free trip to Israel for disabled Jews. The council also runs summer and work programs for special-needs children and adults.

In the Reform movement, Christensen's task force encourages synagogue leaders to include disabled members. About half the synagogues in the Minneapolis area, where Christensen lives, now have inclusion committees, she said.

Rabbi Dan Grossman, who spoke on a panel that followed a screening of the film in January at the New York Jewish Film Festival, said he has worked to make his Recon-

structionist synagogue, Adath Israel of Lawrenceville, N.J., welcoming by offering seeing-eye dogs, a wheelchair-accessible *bimah* and half a dozen reserved wheelchair spots in the pews – and not in the back.

Providing a welcoming physical environment is only half the battle, said Grossman, whose hearing impairment made it a struggle for him to become a rabbi.

"Whoever takes the lead role in the congregation needs to take the position that this is important to the identity of the community," Grossman said of the need to accommodate special-needs members.

"Moses stuttered, Isaac was blind, David was probably hyperactive," he pointed out.

While the Jewish community has made progress accommodating special-needs children, as Lior's community did for his Bar Mitzvah, Lior's father, Mordechai Lieblich, who is a Reconstructionist rabbi, worries that his son will face a tougher environment as he becomes an adult.

Judaism places a high value on scholarship and education, Rabbi Lieblich said, but it's equally important to value people with other abilities.

"I really have a lot of hope," he said, "that the community will take responsibility and do the right thing."

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Can homosexuality and Orthodox Judaism coexist? Gay rabbi says yes

By Liana Shlien

Why would a gay person want to remain an Orthodox Jew? And should the Orthodox community welcome people who are gay?

Those are issues that New York-based Rabbi Steven Greenberg, the first openly gay Orthodox rabbi, grappled with in his 2004 book, *Wrestling with God and Men: Homosexuality in the Jewish Tradition*, and that he addressed in an Ottawa speech at Carleton University on January 24.



Rabbi Steven Greenberg

Rabbi Greenberg's lecture was titled *Adam and Steve: Confronting the Creation Story*. His animated speaking style and frequent anecdotes had the full house of more than 120, mostly students, laughing during his tongue-in-cheek but thoughtful speech.

Rabbi Greenberg discussed the famous biblical prohibition, "Thou shalt not lie with a man as with a woman. It is an abomination," but said no one can be certain what the verse means. "Its historical context," he said, "is important."

He contended the Leviticus passage, like the Sodom and Gomorrah story, refers to an activity that violently subordinates another person. "Sodom is not about wild sexuality. It is about the use of sex to humiliate or debase."

"The truth is, halacha (Jewish law) is not homophobic," said Rabbi Greenberg, adding that most Orthodox rabbis almost never acknowledge this more lenient interpretation of halacha, which says homosexual activity is an "ordinary immodesty; a far cry from a capital crime."

The Torah does not refer directly to homosexuality or forbid sex between women. Same-sex relationships are "not a violation of the order of Creation," he declared.

"Sin only occurs when you have the freedom to choose," he told the diverse crowd.

Rackow returns home for *If Cows Could Fly*

Actor and singer Alan Merovitz is not the only one making his local return when *If Cows Could Fly*, his musical about growing up Jewish in the Ottawa Valley, plays at the Irving Greenberg Theatre Centre over the next three weeks. Many Ottawans will, undoubtedly, recognize clarinetist Frank Rackow in the on-stage klezmer band that accompanies Merovitz.

Rackow grew up in Ottawa before leaving for a music studies at Concordia University in Montreal. While in Montreal, Rackow earned a formidable reputation playing saxophone with various musicians on the jazz scene as well as with the ska-funk band A Dream I Had and the Yellow Door Tabernacle Choir,

"But homosexuals are not free to choose what they are. It would be unfair," he said, "for God to make gay people gay and then not let them live decent lives."

Raised in a Conservative family in Columbus, Ohio, Rabbi Greenberg said he became Orthodox at the age of 15 and attended Yeshiva University in Israel.

He described being "absolutely terrified," when, at age 20, he became attracted to a fellow student. "For years I was in this vice, this

clamp, where I could not say I was gay."

Though Rabbi Greenberg returned to the United States and was ordained in 1983, it was another 16 years before he came out publicly. For the past 20 years, he has worked as a senior teaching fellow at the National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership in New York City where he lives with his partner of eight-and-a-half years.

Following a lively question-and-answer session, the evening ended with a catered kosher reception where Greenberg signed copies of his book, the winner of the Koret Jewish Book Award in 2005 in the category of philosophy and thought.

Rabbi Greenberg's appearance took place during the annual Campus Pride Week of the Carleton University Students Association (CUSA). Adam Serota, president of Carleton's Jewish Students Association (JSA), had approached CUSA about bringing in the rabbi for the event. Serota had seen him in the film *Trembling Before God*, a 2001 documentary about gay and lesbian Orthodox Jews.

Co-sponsors included Carleton Ecumenical Chaplaincy, Jewish Family Services, Carleton GLBTQ Centre, Hillel Ottawa, National Jewish Campus Life, the Arthur Kroeger College of Public Affairs and Students Helping Others Understand Tolerance (SHOUT).

an eclectic choral ensemble.

Now based in Calgary, Rackow has played saxophone with Vibré, a jazz quartet fronted by vibraphonist Arnold Faber, and saxophone and clarinet with Merovitz's Klezmerovitz, one of the most popular klezmer bands in Western Canada.

When *If Cows Could Fly* was revived for its Ottawa run, it was quite fitting that Rackow would come back to his hometown to play klezmer clarinet in the show.

If Cows Could Fly runs Wednesday, February 20 until Sunday, March 9, at the Irving Greenberg Theatre Centre, 1233 Wellington St. W. For tickets, call the box office at 613-236-5196.



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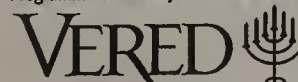
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Jewish Canadian Studies Program

Jewish university students need our support and help

Editor's note: JFO Chair Jonathon Freedman has arranged to share his column, on occasion, with the chairs or presidents of the community's major beneficiary agencies or committees so they can provide some insight into their operations.

The more than 1,500 Jewish university and college students in Ottawa are facing serious and complex challenges to their identities as Jews and as future community leaders.

Many of you are familiar with the now infamous riots in 2002 at Concordia University where former Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu was blocked from speaking. Sadly, most of us are not aware of the anti-Semitic and anti-Israel activity occurring right here in Ottawa on our local campuses.

This semester at the University of Ottawa the Graduate Students' Association, in conjunction with the Alumni Association and the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, sponsored a conference featuring Dr. Norman Finkelstein.

Finkelstein, who is himself Jewish, is an American political science professor who is known for accusing Jews of exploiting the Holocaust for monetary gain and attacking Israel for oppressing the Palestinian people.

His talk on February 5 was titled, "A



Federation Report

Linda Kerzner
Chair, JSA
Adult Advisory Board

Farewell to Israel: The Coming Break up of North American Zionism."

Meanwhile, Holocaust Education Week in Ottawa was the venue for another unexpected campus confrontation.

The Jewish Students' Association sponsored a lecture by Dr. Ephraim Zuroff, Israel director of the Simon Wiesenthal Center. His talk focused on the continuing work of the centre to uncover and prosecute any remaining Nazi war criminals.

After the talk, a letter appeared in the University of Ottawa student newspaper written by a member of the group Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights, an organization that has repeatedly crossed the line in offering anti-Israel rhetoric on campuses across the country.

Particularly inflammatory words were used in the letter including accusations of "ethnic cleansing of Palestine by the citizens of Israel."

The writer demanded that Jewish students in Ottawa "make a distinction between being Jewish and being a Zionist."

Another particularly challenging situation at the national level occurred when student leaders at Ryerson University attempted to have the Canadian Federation of Students, the largest student organization in Canada, pass a resolution calling for a boycott of Israel. The motion was defeated, but the mere presence of it on the agenda is cause for concern.

It is clear Jewish students in Ottawa need support, education, training and a place to turn when confronted. These young people are tomorrow's leaders and they should not feel alone in their struggle against adversarial activities that ultimately affects all of us.

Hillel's national leadership helps to provide some support, but the importance of a local branch of such an organization is vital and never more necessary.

Hillel and the local student board, ably chaired by Ariella Kimmel, Rebecca Margel and Adam Serota, are working hard to enrich the lives of Jewish students in Ottawa and address these issues.

Our key staff members Dov ben-Reuven and Sam Koenig are committed to creating a uniquely pluralistic environment. Our adult advisory board, including myself and Joel Diener, are also there to help.

We want to help all students grow in every way so that they can learn to balance their lives and grow intellectually, spiritually and socially.

But, in order to do the best job possible, we need the Ottawa Jewish community to support us by encouraging all students to get involved in whatever way is most meaningful to them.

We also need volunteer expertise from adult community members to enhance our advisory boards in the areas of advocacy, finance, property management, communications, strategic planning, programming and Jewish living.

We need ongoing financial support to ensure our current and future viability and to enhance our ability to offer Shabbat dinners, top-quality speakers and events.

We need to be on the community's radar as a significant and wide-reaching organization that is training, developing, supporting and enhancing Jewish leaders on campus today and in the community tomorrow.

It's time for the community to heighten its awareness of life on campus and step up to help.

You can reach Linda Kerzner and get involved by e-mailing her at LindaKerzner@rogers.com or calling the Hillel House at 613-236-2345.

Chasm widens between religious and non-religious Jews

Return to and rejection of Jewish observance seem to be pervasive in the Jewish community in Ottawa and elsewhere. While we read about the growing trend of young Jews taking on more observant lifestyles, we are equally aware of the developing dynamic of similar groups of Jews who have taken a different route altogether, that of complete disaffiliation from Judaism.

The community that lies in between is shrinking as choices are being made as to whether to become more observant or to neglect Jewish values and law altogether.

Recent reports indicate that the chasm between the observant and non-observant in Jewish communities is growing. There are many new Orthodox synagogues that have been started across North America with a powerful new surge of Charedi and Modern Orthodox Judaism manifesting itself. Many of the new Orthodox adherents have come from other denominations.

Reform Judaism, which has declared its intent to become more traditional, continues to grow and to develop in North America. The Conservative movement is in a state of crisis with the Canadian contingent more traditionally oriented than its American counterpart, threatening to split over the recent same-sex marriage issue.

The restructuring of North American Judaism gives one pause, and affords no joy to the reader. To the contrary, despite the reformation of Judaism as we know it today, there are innumerable Jews who have decided to forego any affiliation of any kind with



From the pulpit

Rabbi
Howard Finkelstein
Beit Tikvah

institutional Judaism. While some are exploring New Age Judaism and other fads, the overwhelming number are Jews for Nothing. We do not even take into account the Jews who have converted out of our faith altogether. Having recently returned from the American southwest, I was shocked to learn that in a number of cities with more than 100,000 Jewish population, only 17 per cent affiliated.

Recently, I was talking with an individual in the Ottawa Jewish community who was ecstatic about the resurgence of Jewish observant life here. I responded that there was an equal and opposite reaction where others had decided that the level of observance of their parents was too much. This feeling of rejection manifests itself in the fewer numbers of people in Ottawa who are sending their children to day schools and Jewish high schools. In a wider context, we are no longer astonished to read that a large percentage of young Jewish men and women would not be wrought with grief if suddenly the state of Israel would disappear off the face of the earth.


We have reached the point where we feel,

mistakenly, that we must attract the unaffiliated and uninterested by pandering to the lowest common denominator. We suddenly feel a need to change our mission statements, our raison d'être, in order to entice to our programs those who could not care less about their identity.

In truth, the only successful approach to reach out to those who are disconnected with the Jewish community is to be honest. Successful Kiruv organizations such as JET and Chabad have not watered down their program to attract newcomers. Yes, there is a need to

professionalize our approaches to outreach, and this need for reevaluation is applicable to the established institutions of our community, including schools and synagogues.

Those who are engaged in outreach cannot be all things to all people. Community institutions may reflect the mosaic of the Jewish population here, but they must be loyal to certain specific values that cannot be compromised in the name of outreach. Integrity above all must be the *sine qua non* of any Jewish organization engaged in attracting disparate Jews from our community.



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Ending the genocide in Darfur: Yoni Levitan reports on his trip to Sudan

Editor's note: Ottawa native Yoni Levitan is executive director of STAND (Students Taking Action Now Darfur) Canada and a first year law student at Osgoode Hall Law School. When he spoke to the Bulletin on the eve of his departure for the Sudan (see the January 21 edition), we asked him to report back to us.

Since my return from the internally displaced person (IDP) camp in Rumrol, Sudan, I've spent most of my time trying to relate what I experienced there to the expectations I had before leaving. I was surprised when the thoughts that came to dominate my mind related to a business book, *Good to Great*, which I had read over the summer. In the book, author Jim Collins talks about what he calls the "Stockdale paradox," that when trying to transform an organization from good to great, one must "confront the most brutal facts of your current reality, whatever they might be, and at the same time retain faith that you will prevail in the end, regardless of the difficulties." In their struggle to improve the lives of their families, the people of Rumrol came to embody this paradox.

Despite their terrible hardships, the people I interviewed appreciated that liv-



Guest

Yoni Levitan

ing in South Sudan afforded them relative security, while those just a few dozen kilometres north were stuck in the quick of violence. Under the protection of the government of South Sudan, the people of Rumrol were able to focus their efforts on building a new life. The situation, however, has become increasingly strained, as the IDPs of Rumrol now outnumber the residents significantly. It is impossible for the residents, with their limited means, to effectively help the continuous stream of displaced people who have fled from violence in Darfur.

Some of the people I interviewed had arrived less than two weeks prior to my visit, taking 10 to 15 days, by foot, to arrive. With literally no resources to their name these people had resorted to eating leaves to stay alive. They also had an

acute need for cooking supplies (for boiling water), blankets (it gets quite cold at night), and mosquito nets (to prevent malaria). Despite the 45 mosquito nets the trip leader from Canadian Aid for Southern Sudan bought in Nairobi, and some medicine that three Ottawa area doctors had kindly donated to me, we were unable to meet the immediate needs of the new arrivals.

One of the most difficult interviews for me was with a woman named Nybol. Both her husband and her brother-in-law had been killed when her village was attacked. Even more, five of her eight children went missing during the attack and their fate is still unknown. Her hope was that one day her remaining children would be able to go to a proper school. Unfortunately, Nybol's story is not exceptional – there are millions of Darfuris with similar histories, including many who are not even benefiting from the relative safety of South Sudan.

What I witnessed in Rumrol: lack of food, unclean water, disease, and widows and orphans, are all symptoms of genocide. For those in Darfur and Eastern Chad, there are, of course, the additional persisting conditions of murder and rape.

In our efforts to eliminate the symptoms, we must realize that they will endure until we address the root causes of the illness itself – mainly the lack of political will around the world to see an end to the humanitarian crisis.

It's really quite simple, though. Our politicians will act only when we give them a reason to. We must demand it of them. Other key issues, such as uniting fragmented rebel groups and how to prevent Khartoum's Comprehensive Peace Agreement with the South from unraveling, would become less daunting if our politicians were prompted into taking a proactive role in ending genocide in Sudan.

Giving back meaning to the words "Never Again" is what STAND Canada strives to do. By making well-researched policy recommendations to government, and by establishing grassroots support amongst Canadians to end genocide in Sudan, we are able to address the root causes of Darfur's crisis. Fostering an environment in Sudan, which is ripe for peace, is no easy task, but the hundreds of STAND Canada volunteers are not going to give up so easily – millions of people like Nybol depend on us.

Levant takes on human rights commissions

A friend of mine – no supporter of conservative politics, conservative publications or conservative punditry – recently posted a link on her Facebook profile to the website of Ezra Levant, the prominent Calgary conservative pundit, publisher and political organizer.

My non-conservative friend was prompted to do so by a series of videos Levant posted online of his appearance in early January before the Alberta Human Rights Commission.

Here's the comment my friend added to her link: "AMAZING!!! I am not a huge fan of his politics BUT I am now a huge fan of his!"

From his days as a headline-grabbing neoconservative university student, through controversial forays into partisan politics, to a latter-day career as a columnist and magazine publisher, the 35-year-old Levant has a longstanding knack for garnering attention.

To his detractors, he is a loudmouth libertarian blowhard, interested above all in his own self-promotion. To his supporters, well, he's all that too, but also an able spokesman for conservative causes.

Levant's appearance before the human rights commission came as a result of a complaint made against him by someone he describes as "a radical Muslim imam." In 2006, as publisher of the now-defunct *Western Standard* magazine, Levant republished the infamous Danish cartoons



Alan Echenberg

of the Islamic Prophet Muhammad, then at the centre of international controversy. He was one of the few publishers in North America to do so. The complaint was filed after the magazine hit the stands.

Levant took the opportunity of the January hearing to reject the right of the commission to investigate him at all.

"For a government bureaucrat to call any publisher or anyone else to an interrogation to be quizzed about his political or religious expression," he said to the bureaucrat quizzing him, "is a violation of 800 years of common law, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Bill of Rights and the Charter of Rights."

"This commission is applying Saudi values, not Canadian values. It is also deeply procedurally one-sided and unjust."

It was this argument – that human rights commissions allow for politically-motivated attacks on freedom of speech, with little burden of proof – that inspired my friend to cross the political divide and praise him so publicly.

And she wasn't alone. Levant's videos

of his self-described interrogation soon went viral, as the kids say, attracting hundreds of thousands of hits in their first week online, and quickly winning a good degree of attention from bloggers, columnists and talk-show hosts in Canada and the United States.

By contrast, Levant complained, it took much longer for the mainstream Canadian media to pick up on both his story and that of columnist Mark Steyn, who is at the center of a similar human rights complaint lodged against *Maclean's* magazine.

Whether or not the media was slow to notice the story of free speech and human rights commissions, it did not take too long for the issue to appear in the House of Commons.

On the last day of January, Liberal MP Keith Martin filed a private member's motion designed to strip human rights commissions of the ability to investigate alleged hate speech (Martin's motion would have no effect on the ability of the police to launch criminal investigations into such speech).

The motion was praised by Alan Borovoy of the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, who was instrumental in helping to set up such commissions 30 years ago to protect minorities against discrimination, but who now feels they have overstepped their boundaries in investigating speech.

It was also praised, more dubiously, by members of a neo-Nazi website, amazed that their anti-hate-speech-law stand was being championed by a member of a visible minority (Martin) and a Jew (Levant).

Maybe because of this, Martin's motion has caused divisions within his own party. Liberal leader Stéphane Dion asked him to voluntarily withdraw it.

Similarly, Levant's case has exposed (or fostered, depending on your point of view) divisions within the Jewish community, as he has repeatedly attacked the Canadian Jewish Congress, which he calls a left-wing "special-interest lobby group most responsible for criminalizing speech in Canada."

Although the CJC has criticized the investigations of Levant and Steyn as frivolous, the libertarian Levant has a longstanding feud with Congress over its activist intervention in hate-speech cases and its support for human rights commissions.

"It's bloody embarrassing," Levant recently blogged, "when the self-appointed spokesmen of the People of the Book now ban books."

The debate over the limits of free speech, always bubbling under the surface in any democratic country, may be about to grow much more prominent in this country.

Alan Echenberg is TVOntario's Parliamentary bureau chief.

Two-state solution key to avoiding Israel = apartheid

By Ori Nir

WASHINGTON (JTA) - Pro-Israel activists across the United States should be congratulated this week for confronting the fourth annual "Israeli Apartheid Week" - part of the ongoing campaign to vilify the Jewish state.

Facing up to the Israel-is-an-apartheid-state canard is an important service for Israel and for the cause of truth and justice.

But it's a partial service.

Full service should address the danger to Israel's Jewish and democratic nature if its government - and ours - does not insistently pursue a policy that leads to the creation of a Palestinian state.

Most Israelis have come to recognize that the consequence of failing to reach a two-state solution is either a bi-national state, which could not be Jewish, or an undemocratic regime, where Palestinian residents could not enjoy equal rights.

It's time for North American Jews not only to confront the false charges that Israel practises "apartheid" but also to labour so that Israel does not face that fate.

Recently, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert underscored that notion in several courageous public statements.

In an interview with Israel's daily *Ha'aretz* last November, Olmert warned that if the two-state solution collapsed, Israel would "face a South African-style struggle for equal voting rights, and as soon as that

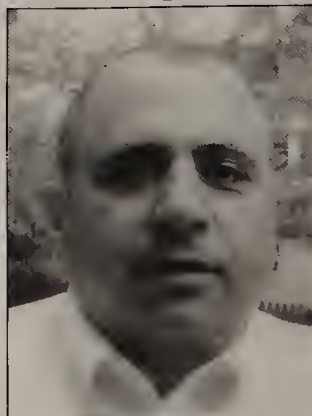
OPINION

happens, the State of Israel is finished."

At the annual Herzliya Conference, Olmert said, "Now we must understand that we do not have time. Once we were afraid of the possibility that the reality in Israel would force a bi-national state on us." He continued, "For 60 years, we fought with unparalleled courage in order to avoid living in a reality of bi-nationalism and in order to ensure that Israel exists as a Jewish and democratic state with a solid Jewish majority. We must act to this end and understand that such a reality is being created and, in a very short while, it will be beyond our control."

Olmert is talking about demography: In 2020, Arabs will be the majority of the overall population in historical Palestine - Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza. He is talking about the deepening roots of Israeli settlements in the ground of the West Bank. He is talking about majorities in both societies - Israeli and Palestinian - that have not known any relationship between Jews and Arabs other than occupation accompanied by violence, humiliation, fear, hatred and enmity. He is talking about a growing perception, among both Israelis and Palestinians, that the other side does not want peace and is not a viable partner for peace.

Olmert's point is that Israel's national security - indeed, its very existence in the



Ori Nir, spokesman
for Americans for Peace Now.

long run - hinges on the formation of a viable Palestinian state. His point is that a Palestinian state is a necessary condition for the survival and health of Israel as a democratic state with a solid Jewish majority.

Pro-Israel advocates in North America do

Israel a service when they confront canards and calumnies about Israel, often through effective public relations campaigns that give the Israeli side of the story or show Israel in a positive light.

While such efforts are important, they are not sufficient. What Israel needs now is more than "hasbara," or propaganda, efforts. It needs help securing its character at least as much as it needs help polishing its image.

The implication for North American friends of Israel is that defending Israel - on or off campus - means going beyond PR campaigns and into the realm of public policy. It means going the extra mile not only to defend Israel's image but to actively support its government's efforts to avert the deterioration toward bi-nationalism.

Being truly pro-Israel in North America today means actively working to support the peace process launched last November at Annapolis. A negotiated two-state solution is the best way to defend Israel from turning into an apartheid-like regime.

Ori Nir is the spokesman for Americans for Peace Now, a Zionist organization that promotes Israel's security through peace and supports the Israeli Peace Now movement.

Winograd panelist draws fire

(JTA) A member of Israel's Winograd Commission drew fire for remarks suggesting sympathy for the Olmert government. Yehezkel Dror caused uproar among Israeli rightists with a *Ma'ariv* interview in which he said Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's attempts to make peace with the Palestinians are a "respectable consideration" that should be weighed against calls for his ouster.

Dror was on the five-member Winograd Commission that delivered a final report censuring the government and the military for various setbacks in the 2006 Second Lebanon War, but stopped short of demanding that Olmert resign. Further incensing the prime minister's critics, who saw partisan interests

as guiding the Winograd conclusions, *Ma'ariv* quoted Dror as asking his interviewer, "What would you prefer? An Olmert-Barak government or new elections in which Netanyahu would come to power?"

Dror told Army Radio following the outcry that he was speaking as a private citizen, and that his views had no influence on the final war report.

"When they read the interview in full, they will see my balanced and apolitical approach," he said. A spokesman for the Winograd Commission voiced regret at the Dror interview but said it did not reflect the panel's work. The Knesset Audit Committee said it would summon Dror for further discussions.

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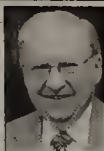
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Shmita: A Different Kind Of Tu B'shevat

This year, the year 2008-5768, is *shmita* - the seventh year - during which Israel lies fallow. In accordance with Jewish law, this year on Tu B'shevat, KKL-JNF did not plant trees but rather prepared them for planting in the fall.

KKL-JNF marked the Tu B'shevat holiday by issuing an open invitation to visit its nurseries in northern, southern and central Israel. Thousands of visitors learned about how trees are grown from seeds and participated in preparing the saplings for planting after Rosh Hashanah 5768 - 2008.

At KKL-JNF's Eshtaol Nursery, situated roughly half way between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, people of all ages and backgrounds participated in holiday activities. They learned about the stages of a tree's growth from the moment the seed sprouts. They prepared sprouts in special growing mixtures in plastic containers and heard about the nurturing each seedling receives until it is ready to be planted in the ground.

Israelis weren't the only people at Eshtaol Nursery on Tu B'shevat. Some 30 participants in KKL-JNF's Canadian American Active Retirees in Israel (CAARI) were on hand, thrilled to see how KKL-JNF transforms dreams into reality.

"The CAARI group is comprised [sic] entirely of retirees and spends two to eight weeks in Israel volunteering in various frameworks," CAARI Program Director Susan Horowitz explained. "They work in hospitals, help with physical rehabilitation, teach children English and spend one day a week at KKL-JNF forests and sites. They also visit KKL-JNF projects and learn about KKL-JNF activities first-hand. Some of us have participated in this mission in the past and some are here for the first time. Our senior participant is 94 years old!"

One CAARI member walked around holding Israeli flags. One CAARI gentleman marvelled at all the other things KKL-JNF does besides planting trees. A second-time delegate was thrilled that the children she worked with last year remembered her. "They couldn't believe that people would come from the USA and Canada just to help them," she said happily.

Among the many who visited the Eshtaol Nursery were a Herzliya Airport airplane mechanic and his mother who had made *aliya* to Israel together eight years ago from Ukraine; a group of IDF female soldiers who'd read about the Tu B'shevat activities on the Internet; and children from the Nahalieli Nursery School of Jerusalem's Pisgat Ze'ev neighbourhood.

Everyone saw a short film on KKL-JNF and its work fighting desertification and global warming. The air was cold, but the atmosphere was very warm. "It seems as though KKL-JNF is just as involved in planting the Jewish people in its land as it is in planting trees," observed a CAARI participant.

On a daily basis you can plant trees for all occasions. An attractive card is sent to the recipient. To order, call the JNF office (613.798.2411).



Beach Boys songs and the story of Esther and Mordechai in SJCC Purim play

By Maxine Miska,

SJCC director of programming

Purim is a time for masquerade and the topsy-turvy. Rabbis might be seen dressed in carnivalesque costumes as the sound of greggers roar over the voices on the *bimah*.

Over-the-top escapades become the norm at Purim-time and the Soloway JCC will go to the limit of Purim *mishegas* this year with its first Purim play, *The Megillah According to the Beach Boys*, on Sunday, March 16 at 7:00 pm.

What do the Beach Boys, blonde and tanned icons of California surfing culture, have to do with royal intrigues in the Persian court and with Jewish tradition? The answer might not be immediately apparent, but, as in the *Megillat Esther*, in which many secret identities are revealed in the plot, so too will many hidden treasures of our community be discovered as the cast sings the music of the Beach Boys and rocks on through the Purim story.

Among the cast members are physician Michael Malek and dentist Irwin Kreisman who both harbour the inner actor behind their white coats and professional demeanors. Malek brings his family's passion for Jewish tradition and music together in his debut role as the astute Mordechai while Kreisman returns to the stage after a 40-year absence as the powerful, but easily manipulated, King Achashverosh.

As a youngster, Kreisman trained at the Montreal Children's Theatre and had some minor roles in television and film.



Among the cast members for *The Megillah According to the Beach Boys* are (front row, left to right) Laura Doull Sher, Chelsea Sauve, Debi Shore, Sylvia Kershman; (back row) Irwin Kreisman, Tal-Or Ben Choreen, Gaviella Silverstone (director), Harvey Steinwald; (missing) Michael Malek and Morris Neuman.

On stage he played Pinocchio, the beast in *Beauty and the Beast* and Happy in *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*.

In the spirit of Purim inversions, two of the oldest cast members challenge the vigour of the youngest. Debi Shore's vibrant personality suffuses her volunteer work at Hillel Lodge, her musical activities and dancing. Sylvia Kershman first appeared on the stage at the Ottawa Little Theatre when she was six. During the Second World War, she joined an entertainment troupe that toured military bases in the Ottawa Valley. Then, with her late husband, Harry Kershman, she performed with the Ottawa Jewish Stage Players and the Ottawa Jewish Theatre Guild in the 1950s.

Perhaps the most striking Purim inversion is Morris Neuman in the role of Haman. Neuman has devoted count-

less hours to the Jewish community as the director of JCC Theatreworks. Neuman's favourite group is the Beach Boys and, as an aficionado of early rock 'n' roll, his licence plates read "doo-wop."

The Megillah According to the Beach Boys is directed by Gaviella Silverstone. She majored in theatre at the University of Ottawa and is now finishing her degree in drama therapy. "Our cast members are from 18 to 80 years old and our focus is on fun and playfulness," she says of her experience in directing the play. "No matter what age you are, you should still have fun and silliness in your life."

Tickets are \$10 for SJCC members and seniors and \$20 for non-members. Dessert will be served.

For more information, contact Roslyn Wollock at 613-798-9818, ext. 263 or rwollock@jccottawa.com.

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Elliot Malamet to lecture on the quest for Jewish spirituality

By Ariel Goldberg, OCJS

One of North America's leading Jewish educators is coming to Ottawa for the first time. On Wednesday, March 5 at 7:30 pm, Elliot Malamet will present a lecture at the SJCC entitled *Is God Close or Far Away - The Quest for Jewish Spirituality*.

Dr. Malamet has made spiritual education his life's work. Through a remarkable career that has spanned the worlds of formal and non-formal Jewish education, academia and writing, Malamet has inspired Jews from all backgrounds and denominations to wrestle with such vital questions as "Is there a God? Do humans have a purpose? Is the Torah true and in what sense?"

By doing this, Malamet believes "we can achieve

greater intensity and connectedness in the area of our lives that matter most – with ourselves, our spouses, our children, our friends and our God."

Malamet believes, when most Jews pray in their synagogues, "they feel that they are simply sending sound waves out into space without any real feeling of connection to the divine."

It need not be this way, he stresses.

"Judaism is an intellectually sophisticated and emotionally nuanced religion," Malamet notes, "that is well equipped to offer power and spiritual meaning to people confronting the daunting challenges of life in the 21st century."

A life-long resident of Toronto, Malamet is professor of Jewish education at

York University where he heads the Jewish Teacher Education Program. In 2002, he co-founded Torah in Motion, an organization that presents a wide variety of conferences, symposia and webcasts on cutting-edge Jewish issues from a traditional perspective.

Equally at home in the worlds of Jewish and secular learning, Malamet earned a PhD in English literature from the University of Toronto where he taught for six years. From 1995 to 2007, he headed the department of Jewish thought at the Community Hebrew

Academy of Toronto. He also served as associate professor of Jewish studies at Queen's University between 1999 and 2007. In his non-formal work as a spiritual educator, Malamet writes a popular column on Jewish education for the *Canadian Jewish News*. He has also written for other Canadian newspapers and made numerous appearances on radio and television. He is now working on a book exploring the ethics of teenagers.

Is God Close or Far Away is presented by the Ottawa College of Jewish Studies



Elliot Malamet

and is co-sponsored by the Soloway Jewish Community Centre and the Max and

Tessie Zelikovitz Centre for Jewish Studies at Carleton University.

Malamet's lecture will be followed by a question-and-answer period, after which he will be available to speak to anyone interested in learning about the Jewish teacher training program he heads at York University.

Admission is \$7 for members of the SJCC or the College of Jewish Studies, \$9 for non-members and \$5 for students and seniors. Tickets are available at the door only.

For further information, call 613-261-2498.

Watercolour painters society honours Morton Baslaw

By Shirley Berman

Friends, family and art enthusiasts travelled to Toronto for the opening of a unique exhibition featuring the works of Morton Baslaw and nine other Canadian watercolour artists.

The event, hosted by the Canadian Society of Painters in Water Colour, was presented to honour their most senior Life Members.

Morton Baslaw has been teaching at the Ottawa School of Art for 40 years. His works have been widely exhibited throughout Canada at major galleries and are a permanent part of national and private collections. He was a co-founder and the first president of the Ottawa Watercolour Society.

The exhibition at the John B. Aird Gallery in Toronto was a celebration of the life work of the 10 artists. Each was represented by four paintings causing the gallery to resonate with vibrant colour and styles that varied from realistic to abstract.

Two of Baslaw's works done in the Gatineau Hills – one of his favourite working venues – depict his unique ability to capture the local seasonal splendour of summer and fall colours.

Baslaw, a veteran of the Second World War, was an



Morton Baslaw with grandson Noah at the Toronto event.

aerial photographer with the RCAF. He is a graduate of the Chicago Academy of Fine Art and has taught in Italy, France and Mexico. Most recently, he conducted seminars in water colour in Provence, France. He has demonstrated for the Volunteer Circle at the National Gallery of Canada.

His awards include the

G. Allan Burton Award from the Canadian Society of Painters in Water Colour, and best of show from the Ottawa School of Art and the Ottawa Watercolour Society.

Baslaw, along with his wife his wife Sheila, sons David, Lawrence, Coleman and their families, attended the opening reception.

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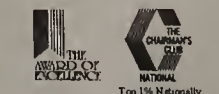
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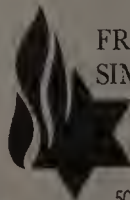
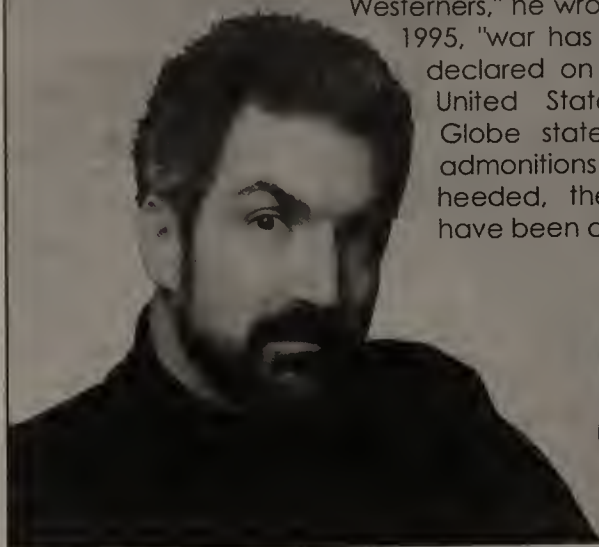
“The Threat to Israel's Existence - Why It's Back, How to Deal with It”

– introducing Daniel Pipes

From Iranian nuclear threats to European elected officials to American professors, voices far and near are coming out against the continued existence of the Jewish state. Their numbers include Islamists of all stripes, leftists, and the hard right. Why, after not hearing such voices for years, are they back and with such intensity? Why have hopes for an Arab-Israeli resolution failed so badly? What do these new dangers mean for Israel? What policies should Western states adopt?

Daniel Pipes is director of the Middle East Forum, a think tank that seeks to define and promote American interests in the Middle East, and a prize-winning columnist now writing for the New York Times Syndicate. The Wall Street Journal calls Mr. Pipes "an authoritative commentator on the Middle East." CBS Sunday Morning says he was "years ahead of the curve in identifying the threat of radical Islam." "Unnoticed by most

Westerners," he wrote for example in 1995, "war has been unilaterally declared on Europe and the United States." The Boston Globe states that "If Pipes' admonitions had been heeded, there might never have been a 9/11."



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Israeli Emanuel Gat Dance to perform at NAC

By Jane and Martin Gordon, CICF Israel 60th Anniversary Committee

The Emanuel Gat Dance will perform for the first time in Canada on Wednesday, March 12 at the National Arts Centre. Two works will be performed, *The Rite of Spring* and *Winter Voyage*.

The Rite of Spring, for five dancers, two men and three women, is set to Stravinsky's memorable score. *Le Monde* has described the company's performance as "beautiful and dangerous."

Winter Voyage, a duet, is set to three songs from Franz Schubert's haunting song cycle, *Die Winterreise*. The Durham, NC, *Herald-Sun* praised Gat's fascinating and intricate movement style, adding "Gat also understands the power of stillness to communicate the things unsaid by words or movements."

The Emanuel Gat Dance was founded in January 2004, by Emanuel Gat, at the Suzanne Dellal Center in Tel-Aviv. Today, it is an internationally recognized company comprising 12 world-class dancers representing the highest levels of Israeli modern dance performance. Emanuel Gat is considered one of Israel's leading modern dance choreographers and is hailed by critics worldwide for a sensual charismatic stage presence and for choreography of robust physicality, daring originality, and sophisticated intelligence.

The company has performed in Holland, the United States, Denmark, Germany, France, Japan, Greece and Belgrade. In July 2006, when the company toured the US, its venues for dance included the American



Emanuel Gat Dance performs *Winter Voyage*.

Dance Festival, Jacob's Pillow Dance and the Lincoln Centre Festival.

In 1995, Emanuel Gat received the Ballet Master Albert Gaubiers Fund Award from Denmark. In 2003, he received the Rosenblum Award for Performing Arts, an honour given annually in Israel for outstanding achievement in the field of dance. As well, he received the Hasia Levy Agron Choreography Prize and the Rabinovich Foundation. In 2005, the company received Israel's Minister of Culture Award and, in 2006, Emanuel Gat was the chosen artist, by the Israel Cultural Excellence Foundation, one of Israel's highest recognition for artists.

Tickets for this event can be bought online at www.ticketmaster.ca or by telephone at 613-755-1111, or by visiting a Ticketmaster outlet.

Music, dance and film antidote for winter blahs

By Maxine Miska,

SJCC director of programming

This year, the Jewish calendar has an extra lunar month, and in Ottawa it may seem like an extra month of winter. The Vered Cultural and Educational Program offers two antidotes: an evening of music and dance to raise spirits and a documentary film about contentious relationships in Israeli politics to sharpen the mind.

On March 2 at 7:00 pm, adults are invited to a performance of Israeli song by Toronto-based Israeli musician, Mickey Lewin, followed by "shira ba-tzibur," an Israeli-style sing-a-long, at the SJCC. Lewin is a singer and guitarist who performs widely in Toronto and has released several CDs of Israeli and Jewish music. Tickets are available at the SJCC front desk, \$10 in advance; \$15 at the door. Parents can drop off their children, five years of age and older, at a supervised movie night that coincides with the concert. Pre-registration is required.

The complex and tense personal rela-

tionship between two giants of Israeli politics, Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres, is delineated in the 2007 documentary *Rabin-Peres: Everything is Personal*. Through historical footage and contemporary interviews, director Arik Henig explores the interdependency of these two leaders, joined at the hip but turned away from each other by personal antipathy and competing political aspirations.

Rabin was a *sabra* and war hero, Peres an immigrant who retained his foreign mannerisms to Israeli eyes. Rabin was admired and led the nation; Peres, a diplomat and bureaucrat, never succeeded in being elected leader. The documentary suggests how this fractious relationship shaped the history of Israel.

The film will be shown April 10, 7:30 pm. Tickets are \$5/SJCC members; \$7/non-members.

For more information, contact Penni Namer at 613-798-9818 ext. 243 or pnamer@jccottawa.com.

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Yom Ha'Atzmaut Sameach! Israel turns 60!

The Ottawa Jewish Bulletin is creating a special commemorative supplement in our May 5th issue.

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Deadline to book greetings is March 5, 2008.

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Beth Shalom celebrates 50 years, June 18

Synagogue prospers during the 1960s

By Paula Smith,

Beth Shalom Congregation

Congregation Beth Shalom was an active place in the 1950s and 60s. As Canada was approaching its centennial, the optimism of the times reached into the shul.

Rabbi Simon L. Eckstein had established himself both as a leader of the Ottawa Jewish community and a respected spokesman to the community-at-large. He was a member of the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews and, together with his wife, Belle, he led the shul through this period of modernization, growth and prosperity.

Many new initiatives were begun in those years under his leadership. The rabbi proposed to the Board of Governors that newly married children of members in the shul be given a free membership for one year and a mezuzah. This initiative was not approved.

In 1961, he began to write and publish the *Rabbi's Newsletter*, a bulletin for college and senior high school students. In it, he offered advice on choosing an out-of-town university (one without a 'quota') and he wrote commentary on the study of the *Merchant of Venice*, on



Beth Shalom honours members with 50 years or more service in its synagogue

Members of Beth Shalom's congregation were honoured at the Chanukah Dinner Dance on December 18, 1965 for 50 years or more service in the synagogue. Special commemorative plaques bearing a replica of the Tree of Life (*Aitz Hachaim*) on the doors of the *Aron Hakodesh*, as well as the recipient's name and appropriate inscription, were awarded to each of the members honoured. (Front row, from left to right: Morris Marks, Morris P. Zelikovitz, Samuel Silverman, Lyon Cohen, Jess Abelson, Sol Feller, Max Kizell; (back row) Isaac Fagin, Leon Petegorsky, Joseph Torontow, Alex Betcherman, Rabbi Simon L. Eckstein, Hyman Gould, President, Beth Shalom, Thomas Sachs, Meyer Lieff, Nathan Witen; (absent) Abraham Ash, Murray Basiaw, Albert Brunberg, Samuel Edelson, David Epstein, Jack Florence, Louis Greenberg, Lazarus Schecter, Myer Stein. A plaque was also presented to the family of the late Abraham Shaffer, recently deceased.

(Photo courtesy of Ottawa Jewish Archives)

whether Israel had legitimate jurisdiction in the Eichmann trial and on the religious beliefs of both Freud and Einstein. Each issue contained a short and interesting

story from the Torah, with a brief commentary.

In 1960, Rabbi Eckstein began a girls Bat Mitzvah or Consecration class, which included weekly

study sessions with the rabbi and a final Service of Consecration for the whole group held (usually in June) to celebrate the girls' coming of age. This group Bat Mitzvah for

the young girls of the congregation continued for more than 25 years. There was also an active Tallis and Tephilin Club and a 'minyanares' group for teenage boys.

In the 1960s, the board of governors had 17 committees reporting to it because there were so many activities happening in the shul. Sisterhood had almost as many committees as the board and there was no shortage of volunteers for the work to be done. It seemed that life revolved around the shul.

And the shul prospered. Financial records show that in the early years its income exceeded expenses by substantial amounts – from 20 per cent to as much as 40 per cent. Both the main sanctuary and the auditorium were filled to capacity for the High Holy Days. Even though many Jewish families were moving to the suburbs and their synagogues too, Beth Shalom flourished as a downtown shul.

A special evening of "Bubbles and Bites," celebrating the 50 years of Beth Shalom, takes place Wednesday, June 18. For further information and tickets contact the shul office at 613-789-3501.

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Carmel Trio wows audience at Israel @ 60 opening concert

By Dr. Norm Barwin,
President CICF

An enthusiastic audience was recently wowed by the musicians of Carmel Trio during the opening concert of the Israel @ 60 Celebrations at Tabaret Hall, University of Ottawa.

The concert was presented by the Canada-Israel Cultural Foundation, the Embassy of Israel and the department of music of the University of Ottawa.

Flutist Eyal Ein-Habar and Oboist Dudi Carmel, both principal players with the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra were joined by Canadian pianist, Stephan Sylvestre. They perform together frequently as the Carmel Trio and were on a tour of

Canada. Carmel also works as a conductor.

The principal of the University of Ottawa, Dr. Gilles Patry, welcomed the guests and spoke of the strong relationship between the Ottawa Jewish community, Israel and the University of Ottawa.

Israeli Ambassador Alan Baker welcomed the many diplomats in attendance and spoke of the importance of culture and music to the lives of all people regardless of differences. He indicated that these musicians were true ambassadors of Israel.

In my role as president of the CICF, I thanked those involved in the planning and success of the evening and noted the mission of

CICF was to present Israeli culture to Canadians. Israel @ 60 Celebrations will fulfil these goals by showcasing music, dance, film, art, theatre, food and wine in the months to follow.

The first half of the concert included C.P.E. Bach's Trio Suite, Ernest Bloch's Suite Modale for Flute and Piano, Shlomo Yoffe's Dialogue for Flute Oboe. Andrey Rubtsov's Marbella's Fantasia was an exciting completion to the first half of the concert.

After the intermission, the interpretation of Yoav's Talmi's Suite of Israel Songs for flute and piano was creative and innovative, and overwhelmed the audience. Franz Doppler's La Sonnambula, David



Flutist Eyal Ein-Habar, pianist Stephan Sylvestre and oboist Dudi Carmel receive audience applause at Tabaret Hall, uOttawa.
(Photo: Sylvia Klein)

Walter's transcription for oboe and piano of Mendelson's Three Songs Without Words and Paul Ben Haim's Three Songs Without Words for flute and piano completed the second half of the concert, amidst calls for an

encore and a standing ovation.

During their visit to Ottawa, Dudi Carmel and Eyal Ein-Habar also gave master classes in flute and oboe to University of Ottawa music students.



Committee members Nicole Rosenberg, Shari Cogan, Karen Taylor, Lisa Lieth and Sharon Reichstein are pleased with the success of the Na'amat fundraiser. Committee members missing: Nicole Ginsberg, Andrea Malek and Elianna Saidenberg.

Na'amat Oetzma chapter's martini madness raises \$10,000

Martinis, music, hors d'oeuvres and desserts set the mood at the home of Jon and Shari Cogan on January 26 as the Na'amat Oetzma Chapter doubled last year's proceeds at their 7th annual Fundraiser Auction. The event, attended by more than 100 people, raised just over \$10,000.

The variety of donated goods available for the live auction was the key to success, says auction coordinator Lisa Lieth.

"We were very careful with our items this year, making sure to get a large variety of things that would appeal to every type of person. We

collected art, gifts, restaurants, spas, jewelry, cooking classes, photographers and so much more."

The proceeds will support the Swing into Action Program, which is one of Na'amat Canada's Capital Campaigns that serves to build and refurbish playgrounds for 260 public daycare centres in Israel. The Gilo Day Care Center in Jerusalem is the recipient of the money raised. Since the event was so successful, the Oetzma Chapter was able to use the additional money raised for a Perpetual Scholarship fund and now each year, Na'amat Ottawa Oetzma Chapter will be able to send one lucky

young woman to university.

"I simply cannot get over the growth of this event," says Sharon Reichstein chair of the auction. "When I started chairing the event four years ago, we were raising a mere \$3,000. We set our sights high this year and were aiming for \$7,000, but \$10,000 is simply unbelievable. It feels so good to know that a small committee's dedication and effort can really make a difference."

To learn more about Na'amat or to make a donation, e-mail Sharon Reichstein at naamat_otzma@hotmail.com.

Child safety program demonstrated at Hillel Academy



Misha Tsirlin, Adam Freedman and Emily Shinder, Hillel Academy Grade 1 students demonstrate the online safety program "Billy Brings His Buddies" to Honeywell Canada President Charlene Arje.

Honeywell is one of the corporate sponsors of the Canadian Centre for Child Protection, which officially launched the program with \$2 million from the federal government.

The Canadian Centre for Child Protection is a national non-profit organization based in Winnipeg, dedicated to the personal safety of all children.

Billy Brings His Buddies is one of the awareness programs and services to reduce child victimization.

Hillel Academy Vice-Principal for General Studies Wendy Waxman said she is adopting the whole Kids in the Know program (www.protectchildren.ca or www.kidsintheknow.ca) from the Centre for the entire school.

(Photo courtesy Canadian Centre for Child Protection)

Crowds turn out on Mitzvah Day to perform good deeds

By Michael Regenstreif

The third annual Mitzvah Day, a community-wide day of doing good deeds organized by the Young Adult Division (YAD) of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa, brought more than 400 people of all ages – from tiny tots to *bubbies* and *zaydas* – into the Soloway Jewish Community Centre (SJCC) and Hillel Lodge on January 27 to spend a few hours helping make other peoples' lives a little better.

"I think we need to alert the Guinness Book of World Records and let them know we're going to set a new record for the most mitzvahs ever performed in one place at one time," declared Evan Zelikovitz at the opening ceremonies. Zelikovitz and his wife, Lenora, were the Mitzvah Day co-chairs.

Zelikovitz noted the presence of many Mitzvah Day guests – including Mayor Larry O'Brien, former mayor Jacqueline Holzman, Ottawa Centre MP Paul Dewar, *Ottawa Citizen* Publisher Jim Orban, Ottawa 67's player Jason Bailey and CBC Radio newsmen Laurence Wall – who turned out to show their support and help perform mitzvahs. Zelikovitz expressed his hope that, in the future, Mitzvah Day would become a city-wide event with Ottawans from all backgrounds spending the day doing good deeds.

Adrian Harewood, the popular host of CBC Radio One's *All in a Day*, was Mitzvah Day's honorary chair. He also spoke to the crowd who gathered in the SJCC social hall for a hearty breakfast before getting on with their mitzvahs.

Harewood said the first mitzvah of the day was performed by his Montreal-based fiancée. When he missed the 6:00 am bus he planned to take to be back in Ottawa in time



Children at the SJCC enjoy ice cream and a Junkyard Symphony after a morning of mitzvahs.

(Photo: Peter Waiser)

for Mitzvah Day, his fiancée volunteered to drive him so he would not miss the opening ceremonies.

"The very idea of mitzvahs is important," Harewood continued. "In our increasingly interconnected world, mitzvahs are important in creating the kind of community we need. Mitzvahs affirm humanity and show what we can do as a community."

With the opening ceremonies concluded, groups of people quickly spread out to designated rooms and areas within the SJCC and Hillel Lodge to perform mitzvahs. And with most mitzvahs timed to take an hour or less to complete, most groups did a mitzvah circuit through the building, getting the chance to perform several mitzvahs each.

Various locations throughout the SJCC were temporarily turned into crafts workshops.

Down the corridor from the second floor social hall – a.k.a. Mitzvah Day Central Headquarters – the boardroom hummed with friendly chatter as people gathered around

the long tables made lap blankets for the ALS Society of Ontario.

"The blankets will be distributed to ALS patients, both locally and throughout Ontario," said Marion Williams, the ALS Society's regional director. "Mitzvah Day was a great event. As a small health charity, it was wonderful for us to see the community coming together to support people who are living with this dreadful disease."

Williams added that she was impressed that so many children took the opportunity to learn about the disease and the terrible toll it takes.

Further down the hall, the nearby teen lounge and SJCC classroom were also centres of activity turning out cheer kits for shut-ins and people in hospital, journals that will be given to women living in shelters or are part of the Jewish Family Services (JFS) Shalom Bayit program for abused women, and bookmarks that will be turned over to the literacy program at Severn Avenue Public School.

Downstairs, outside the swim-

ming pool window, the activity gallery was filled with small children making tzedakah boxes and calendars while the Ganon Preschool classrooms were filled with young children making Passover and Chaoukah boxes that will surely make those holidays a happier time for many people.

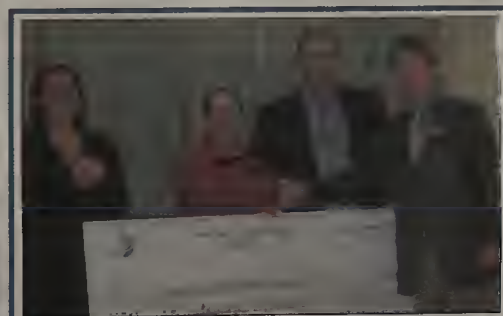
Meanwhile, in the art studio, packages of daily necessities were being assembled for distribution to Ottawa's homeless population by JFS's Street Smarts program, and by Centre 454, a drop-in centre run by the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa. The Mitzvah Day Knitters were also in attendance at the SJCC making scarves for those two programs.

Across the way, at Hillel Lodge, children and seniors worked together at tables making and painting crafts for worthy causes.

While groups of children moved from mitzvah to mitzvah, many also took time to donate a toonie and partake of the games being played in the SJCC gym. The money raised by the Mitzvah Day gym activities was earmarked to buy much-needed athletic equipment for the Severn Avenue Public School.

As the busy morning wound toward noon, people again filled the social hall for the Mitzvah Day closing ceremonies at which Zelikovitz announced that in excess of 575 mitzvahs were performed. And that number didn't include the Mitzvah Day toy drive that collected toys to be sent to needy children in Israel or the Ganon Preschool book drive that raised more than \$1,000 to buy books for the literacy program at the Severn Avenue Public School. Severn principal David Petrie was on hand to thank everyone for the mitzvahs performed on behalf of the school.

With the ceremonies ended, cake and ice cream were served and the kids settled in to enjoy an interactive performance by the Junkyard Symphony, an entertaining percussion ensemble whose instruments were all recycled and made from everyday throwaway items.



Presentation at Severn Avenue Public School

A delegation from Ganon Preschool, the Jewish Federation of Ottawa, the Mitzvah Day committee and the Ottawa 67's hockey team attended the monthly assembly at Severn Avenue Public School on January 29.

Principal David Petrie introduced the group and spoke about his inspiring experience in attending Mitzvah Day at the SJCC two days earlier. Then 67's forward Jason Bailey and goalie Adam Courchaine spoke to the students about Mitzvah Day and the importance of education and community service. They also fielded questions from the students about playing hockey.

Then a giant cheque was presented to the school by Jenny Shinder of Ganon Preschool and Sarah Silverstein and Mitch Miller of the Mitzvah Day committee. It represented the money raised by the Ganon book drive on behalf of the Severn Avenue Public School's literacy program and by the Mitzvah Day gym activities for athletic equipment for the school.

(OJB Photo: Micheal Regenstreif)



Mitzvah Day participants assemble packages of daily necessities for the homeless.

(Photo: Peter Waiser)



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Wolfe Ingber, beloved father by Rachel Schachter

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Franeen Shier Warmest wishes for a very happy birthday by Laya and Ted Jacobsen

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In Honour of:

Betty Ballon With our best wishes for good health and happiness on your 100th birthday by Sarah and Arnie Swedler

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Morton Baslaw Mazal Tov on being honoured by the Canadian Society of Painters in Watercolour by Fuzzy and Max Teitelbaum

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IN MEMORY OF:

Beloved granddaughter of

Christiana Bryan by Morag Burch

Henry Cowen by Debi and David Shore

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Arnold Lander by Helen Trachtenberg; the Residents, Board and Staff of Hillel Lodge; and Elaine Hauptman

Morris Silbert by Ingrid and Gerry Levitz; Anna Bilsky and Peter Humber; Monica Rosenthal and Stuart McCormack, Perry and Devon; Andrea Lulka and Eduardo; Eduardo and Regine Lulka; Amanda Masterson; Helen Rosenthal; Mark Dermer and Deborah Margo and Family; Susan Fainer, Laurie Fainer and Bruce Levy; Teena and Walter Hendelman; and Mountain Cablevision; The Segal-Daly Family; Minna Loewith; Kevin Klinger, Nick Goupinets, Alex Romanko and Laurie Fainer; Natalya Umyskova; Simon Lebrun; Mirela Teodor; and Gabriel Teodor.

IN HONOUR OF:

Mort Blieberg On your recovery by Elaine Hauptman

Cindy and Chris Cottin Congratulations on the birth of your son Michael Alexander. All the best for many happy, healthy years by Laurie and Bill Chochinov

Lazer Kaminsky Happy Birthday! Bis 120 by Agnes and Tibor Schatteles

Cary and Edward Lander Mazal Tov on the birth of your grandson by Sylvia and Micheal Caplan

David Mendelsohn On your recovery by Elaine Hauptman

Joyce and Bernie Pagurek Congratulations on the birth of your granddaughter Kayla Jen. All the best for many happy, healthy years by Laurie and Bill Chochinov

Rita Ryant Wishing you a very happy birthday and wishing you and your husband both good health by Helen Rosenthal

Debra and Gary Viner Congratulations on the birth of your granddaughter. All the best for many happy, healthy years by Laurie and Bill Chochinov

The Foundation would like to thank Efraim Warshavsky for a generous donation to the Ritual Fund at Hillel Lodge.

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Daniel Erlich returns to Ottawa

Speedy and skilled winger Daniel Erlich was one of the Israel U18 team's best players on both occasions we saw him skate in the nation's capital. Despite playing on a squad that was overmatched against the local competition, the five foot seven inch, 155 pound Erlich was clearly one of the best skaters on the ice and was also gracious to pose for pictures with Nepean players at the conclusion of the game.

Erlich competed in several U18 IIHF competitions for Israel while playing for the Minor Midget AAA Toronto Marlboros and the Tier II Ontario Provincial Junior A Toronto Junior Canadiens.

The 16-year-old Thornhill native returned to Ottawa on February 17, this time as a member of the OHL London Knights.

For the record, Erlich, the Barrie Flyer's Shawn Frank and the 67's Jason Bailey are the only Jewish players in the OHL this year. Dmitri Levin played briefly for the Oshawa Generals, but is now playing Tier II Junior A in the Maritimes.

"Bails" continues strong OHL and community play

With five of their best offensive players injured or sick, Jason (Bails) Bailey scored twice on January 13, to end the 67's three-game winless slide with a 5-3 victory against the Mississauga St. Michael's Majors at the Civic Centre. Bailey was in tough in a recent battle he had against Peterborough Petes tough guy Justin Soryal on January 25. He suffered a broken nose and orbital bone and was forced to sit out weekend games against Windsor and Kingston as a precautionary measure.

Even banged up, Bails still found the time to help out the Jewish community on Mitzvah Day at the Soloway JCC on January 27, and made Temple Israel student, and huge Jason Bailey fan, Colman Orenstein's day a special one. Bailey assisted Howie Osterer's Grade 5 class make lap warmers for ALS patients.

Bailey says he's good to go and should be back in the 67's lineup soon.

Chelios passes Jewish goalie Roberts

Defenceman Chris Chelios recently became the second oldest player to play in the National Hockey League, and now trails only the great Gordie Howe who played his last NHL game at the age of 52. What was not widely reported is that the figure Chelios eclipsed in his quest to catch Mr. Hockey, was Jewish goaltender Moe Roberts (1905-1975). Roberts spent most of his lengthy pro career in the Can-Am League and the AHL, twice winning the Calder Cup with Cleveland. Along the way, Roberts also appeared in 10 NHL games.

Following the 1946 season, Roberts retired from active play and found employment as a trainer with the Chicago Blackhawks. In that capacity, Roberts occasionally dressed in goalie gear to allow players extra shooting time in practice.

On November 25, 1951, 46-year-old Roberts was asked to serve as an emergency goalie when Hawks puck stopper Harry Lumley was injured. Roberts donned the pads and played a shutout third period against the Detroit Red Wings. One of Robert's most memorable moments was a point

blank save made on Gordie Howe!

Roberts still has the distinction of being the oldest netminder ever to play in the show. The 26-year difference between his first and last NHL game is the greatest span among all goalies and the 19 years between National Hockey League appearances is still a record.



Hartman has heart

Mike Hartman, a solid pro who played for 397 NHL games with Winnipeg, Buffalo, Tampa and the New York Rangers, briefly came out of retirement as an emergency replacement for the ECHL Charlotte Checkers. Jason Shaya, director of media relations for the Checkers, said that despite not playing for several years, Mike was great in the game and didn't look out of place.

Hartman has the distinction of being one of the very few players to have his name inscribed on the Stanley Cup despite not dressing for a playoff game. Hartman's leadership qualities were obviously well respected by the Rangers, qualities also recognized when he was chosen player/coach of the U.S. hockey team for the 1997 Macabiah Games.

"Chick" Zamick (1926-2007)

It is with sadness that the O-Zone reports the passing of "the Gordie Howe of England," Victor (Chick) Zamick.

Winnipeg born Zamick, a member of the British Hockey Hall of Fame, was without doubt the greatest scorer in the history of British hockey.

Victor was one of 12 children of parents originally from Ukraine. He didn't start to play organized hockey until he was 15, but soon was good enough to skate in the Ontario Hockey Association with the St. Catharines Teepees under Rudy Pilous.

After a short stint with the armed forces and some playing time in the senior amateur ranks in Alberta, Zamick convinced a local recruiter that he could play professional

hockey in England, and the rest is history.

From 1947 to 1958, the swift-skating but diminutive five foot seven inch, 140 pound centre accumulated a staggering 778 goals and 645 assists with Nottingham. Zamick was voted on to nine consecutive All-Star teams and was on several British League Championship teams. After his playing career, he remained in business in Nottingham.

Nepean Minor Hockey Association Midget B hockey coach Kris Langland spent the last few years in England with the Canadian Armed Forces and was also involved coaching hockey. He had a chance to meet Zamick, who was a regular at the London rink where Langland's team played and practised.

Langland says Zamick enjoyed watching the kids play and was quite interested in meeting with Canadians and talking hockey with them.

Chick is survived by wife Vera, four children and six grandchildren and a brother Joe who also played professional hockey in England and Switzerland.

The Zamicks are related to the Wall family who are members of Ottawa's Jewish community.

Another Jew in the show

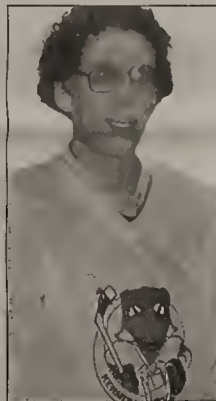
Former Michigander and AHL Manitoba Moose Mike Brown is now playing with the Vancouver Canucks and was even the victor in his first NHL scrap! He joins Mike Cammalleri, Mathieu Schneider, Eric Nystrom and Jeff Halpern as current Jewish NHLers.

Kermits celebrate 30 years of play

A tip of the O-Zone cap to Peter Teitelbaum, who, for the past 30 years, has acted as playing commissioner of the Kermit Hockey League.

The Kermits play every Tuesday night at McNabb Arena.

The team that scores the last goal gets evening bragging rights at the Prescott, the league's watering hole of choice. Kermit all-time leading scorer Lou Davis can always be counted on for an honest summary of each contest.



Jewish Men's Hockey League: Fremeth on top

After 16 games, the Fremeth squad leads the JMHL with 41 points. The Fremeths, led by Captain Howie Fremeth, are getting great goaltending from Ari Cherun and solid offence from Andrew Roden, Ryan Bodnoff and Alex Epel.

A highlight of this season has to be the spirited play of the three father and son tandems - Bruce and Matt Engel, Jonathan and Laurie Weinstein and Paul and Ryan Bodnoff.

The JMHL is a great way for newcomers to the community to break in and make new friends. The league welcomed 20 new skaters in 2007-08. Players of all skill levels are welcome each year. For more information contact SJCC Athletic and Leagues Manager Jon Braun at 613-798-9818, ext. 267 or at jbraun@jccottawa.com.

Team	W	L	T	Points
FREMETH	12	3	1	41
ZUNDER	10	5	1	37
CHUCKIE	4	9	3	27
DOUBLE M	3	10	3	25

Win = 3 points • Tie = 2 points • Loss = 1 point





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Tamir acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations, which were received as of December 27, 2007.

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Faye and Arnold Tennenhouse on their birthdays by Evelyn and Norman Potechin

Barbara and David Slipacoff on the birth of their grandson, Spencer, by Debbie, Norm and Vicky Ferkin

Mr. Max Zelikovitz on his 97th birthday by Evelyn, Norman and the Potechin Family

Mr. Jeff Katz on his 64th birthday by Susan Heisel and Sye Mincoff

Mr. and Mrs. Michael Caplan on the birth of their grandson by Marcia and Richard Zuker; by Debbie, Norm and Vicky Ferkin; by Esther and David Kwavnick; and by Tamir Participants, Staff and Board of Directors

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Mr. and Mrs. Abe Tarasofsky on their 50th wedding anniversary by Lily and Jerry Penso; by Esther and David Kwavnick; and by Tamir Participants, Staff and Board of Directors

Mrs. Sara Melamed with belated birthday wishes by Ellen Segal

Ms. Rachel Pernica on her birthday by Ellen Segal

Mr. and Mrs. K. Bielak on the engagement of their sons, Gideon and Shlomo by Sheila and Larry Hartman

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Mother of Abraham Iny by Betty and Jay Dover and by Susan and Jonathan Fisher

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Aunt of Talal, Gina and Noah Camel-Toueg by Mona, Michael, Evan and Jordan Takefman

Sister of Wendy Klein by Debbie and Norm Ferkin

Bess Weiner by Debbie and Norm Ferkin; by Laura Penso; and by Jerry and Lily Penso

William Shaffer by Lily and Jerry Penso

Freda Appel by Nina and Elliot Arron

General

Wishing Mr. and Mrs. Irving Bercovitch well in their new condo by Phyllis and Laz Newman

In appreciation to Esther Tarasofsky and Esther Kwavnick by Beverly Gershkovitch

Wishing Nadine and Brian Mordfield and Faye Shulman well in their new home by Susan Heisel and Sye Mincoff

Wishing Mr. and Mrs. Brent Almstedt much luck in their new home by Donna Karlin

Wishing Lily Penso mazeltov on recent accomplishments and being honoured and recognized as the first President of Tamir by Barb and Barry

In honour of Meredith Caplan by Rita Essner

Wishing Happy Chanukah to Yossi Bokhaut, Vicky Ferkin, Michael Bokhaut, Ben Greenberg, Amanda Greenberg, Samantha Greenberg and Alexis Greenberg by Barry Bokhaut and Barbara Greenberg

In appreciation to Harvey Kardish by Louis and Muniel Kardish

Wishing Merry Christmas to Gail Driscoll by Lynn McFarlane

Wishing Merry Christmas to Lynn McFarlane by Gail Driscoll

YRHS gets high marks from Ministry of Education, plans to attract more students

By Rabbi Howard Finkelstein

An experiment begun by a number of dedicated parents in 1995 is celebrating its Bar Mitzvah year.

For the past 13 years, Yitzhak Rabin High School has been providing quality education in Judaic and secular studies that surpass Ontario Ministry of Education requirements. Graduating students have received magnanimous scholarships and admissions to universities of their choice. Under the leadership of our principal Prosper Torjman and the dedicated staff of YRHS, we received a perfect score this year from the Ontario Ministry of Education inspection, with ratings of excellence in administration, adherence to ministry curriculum requirements and teaching and evaluation.

While the original student body at YRHS primarily reflected families from Orthodox and traditional backgrounds, the present make up of our students is more pluralistically oriented with students from every Jewish religious denomination. In addition, a large number of students are coming from non-affiliated Jewish homes.

YRHS is now engaged in a strong proactive campaign to attract more students to our program, including those who have not had Jewish day school education.

The Judaic program is undergoing special revitalization and revision reflecting the needs of our student body, so as to enable them to succeed in the outside world and, at the same time, grow in their pride in, and commitment to, Judaism. Courses are designed to integrate Judaic and secular learning in order to produce the well educated and well rounded Jewish student.

To cite several examples, ethics courses, which touch on rabbinic teachings found in the Talmud, centre around two extremely important fields today: medicine and business.

The number of issues that crop up in the medical field today, such as stem cell research, end-of-life topics, abortion, surrogacy and reproductive problems are among the subjects studied. Those who are contemplating a career in the sciences and medicine will face these and similar issues, but will be armed with a Jewish perspective on how to resolve some of the problems that may arise.

In the business ethics section, issues such as insider trading, creative accounting, false advertising, product quality control and others are looked at in order to gain a Jewish perspective.

Courses in the Judaic Department are accredited by the Ontario Ministry of Education, and involve the use of high tech aides to help students excel. YRHS is in the process of connecting with online courses

given by various Hebrew colleges across North America and establishing courses in world religion and philosophy. The courses will be offered as electives, following completion of the two-year mandatory Hebrew language program, which is geared to students of all backgrounds.

The PrepTrak program for all incoming students, regardless of Jewish educational background, examines contemporary Jewish life, as well as our heritage and history, through the use of texts such as Telushkin's *Jewish Literacy*. YRHS is the only Jewish high school in Canada that is involved with the David Project, an Israel Advocacy Program that enables our students, when they reach university, to respond responsibly to arguments leveled against Israel by anti-Zionists.

The Torah department concentrates on issues of contemporary concern to students such as relationships, the role of law in society, as well as the discussion of the ethical principles that form the foundation of our faith as enunciated in our ancient texts.

The Jewish History program exposes students to the influences of different religious movements throughout the ages, as well as the thoughts of great thinkers over the years. In addition, the impact of anti-Semitism on our history and on our community is examined.

In addition to the educational component that makes up and defines the Judaic department, the informal cultural atmosphere of the school serves as an important ingredient in the lives of students. Through the avenue of Shabbatonim, Purim parties, fund raising functions, community involvement projects and other activities, YRHS students' perspectives on Jewish life are enhanced.

A continuing education program for the community-at-large, where faculty members will be invited to lecture the community in their various areas of expertise, will soon be introduced.

You are invited to come and visit the school and explore the possibilities of sending your child to Yitzhak Rabin High School. For further information, please contact the school office at 613-727-0420.

Rabbi Howard Finkelstein, director of Judaic studies at YRHS, is also the rabbi of Congregation Beit Tikvah (formerly Beth Shalom West). Ordained at Yeshiva University, Rabbi Finkelstein possesses master's degrees in Jewish secondary education from Yeshiva University and in education and culture from New York University. He is also a graduate of the administrators training program of JESNA (Jewish Education Service of North America) and has a principal's licence from the Board of Jewish Education of Greater New York.

Donation cards can be purchased for a minimum charge of \$12.00 by contacting the Tamir office at 613-725-3519, 11 Nadolny Sachs Private, Suite 218, Ottawa, Ontario, K2A 1R9, or by e-mail to aalmstedt@tamir.ca

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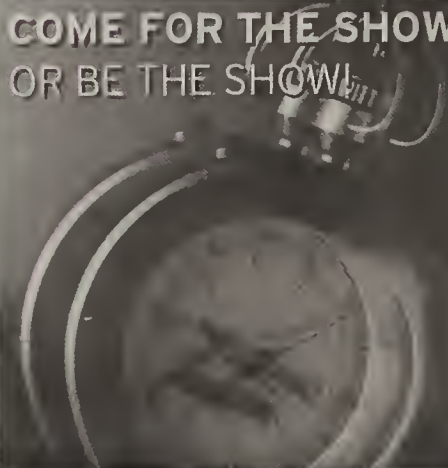
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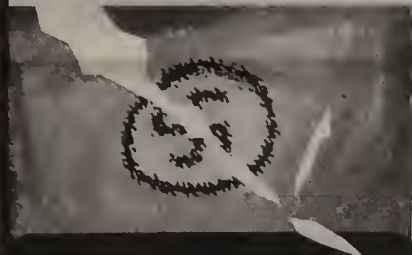
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VOLUNTEER CORNER

Volunteer Corner is courtesy of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa. All beneficiary agencies are invited to list their volunteer opportunities.

Volunteer Opportunities

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- **Transportation needed:** We are seeking drivers to transport seniors to and from medical appointments; special events and social opportunities. If you are available to assist in transporting seniors to and from their homes your help is needed.

- **Kosher Meals on Wheels:** Drivers who can fill on short notice are needed. We drive meals on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Can you help this winter?

- **TeleShalom:** We are currently seeking volunteers to place a daily calls to seniors. This is something that you can do from the comfort of your own home and will only take a little time. If you are able to volunteer in this way please let us know.

- **Friendly visiting:** Many seniors could use a friendly smile and chat over a cup of coffee. Can you help break isolation for a senior?

- **Making connections:** Gutten Tog Program. Many of our seniors are living in long term care facilities. They would benefit from a visit; once a week, every other week or once a month.

Miriam's Well: The monthly fruits and vegetables program needs more people to help with the distribution.

- **Craft Club:** Can you help a few seniors work on an art project? Let us know.

- **ESL and Homework Club volunteers needed:** We are seeking volunteers to assist new Canadians with their English and to help out with the homework club at the Alta Vista library. If you are interested please let us know.

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Books you won't be ambivalent about

We all have biases. Reading books that challenge our biases keeps us on our toes and either helps us in understanding why we maintain our convictions, or pushes us to question them. Here are two titles that are guaranteed to push ideological buttons.

Ambivalence: Crossing the Israel/Palestine Divide
By Jonathan Garfinkel
Viking Canada/Penguin
Hardcover, 2007

Ambivalence is what Toronto poet and playwright-turned-author Jonathan Garfinkel feels toward his Zionist education and his faith. "I'm looking for something to make me believe."

And so Garfinkel heads to Israel. Hearing of a house in Jerusalem that is cohabited by a Palestinian and a Jew, he decides to find out more and to try to understand the Israeli/Palestinian conflict at the same time. The trouble, though, is that Garfinkel's own ambivalence, which fuels his desire to come to terms with his Jewish upbringing and Labour Zionist schooling, is, itself, mired in bias. It's this bias that leads him down roads – in the fourth year of the second intifada – that take him to the West Bank and the Qalandia refugee camp, and to marginalized Israeli groups like Zochrot, whose name means 'remembering' and whose mandate is to never forget what Palestinians refer to as the *Nakba* or 'catastrophe' of 1948. Yet Garfinkel never exchanges dialogue with middle-of-the-roads and with Israelis who believe in peace but who have concerns about their neighbours. One just has to follow Garfinkel's journey, or read his bibliography, to see that he gives one perspective more *air time* than the other, without challenging the answers he's given.

However, regardless of where you stand on Middle East politics, you have to give Garfinkel credit for his honesty and for his wonderful writing. His poetic background is evident. Questions that rattle the lessons he learned at Bialik Hebrew Day School are "stones thrown at the glass walls of my faith." Trying to make sense of all that he hears from the people he runs into, he sees there are layers to listening, "an archeology to understanding."

He's also very funny. His fanciful dialogues with his Zionist Bialik teacher, a composite character he calls "Mrs. Blintzkreig," and other teachers and relatives from his past, are entertaining. So are his musings. In his first rendezvous with a Palestinian woman, he decides that questions relating to suicide bombing, such as "Have you ever loved a bomber?" or "Have any of your relatives ever blown them-



Book Beat

Kinneret Globerman

selves up?" or "Do you have suicide bombing fantasies?" might best be left by the wayside.

Garfinkel, preoccupied by his faith, is no clearer at the end than he was at the beginning of his quest for understanding. He's just more polarized. And that's what makes this book so disappointing; its ending leads the author back to the beginning, still conflicted and no closer to abandoning his ambivalence about his Jewish identity.

Christ Killers: The Jews and the Passion, From the Bible to the Big Screen
By Jeremy Cohen
Oxford University Press
Hardcover, 2007

I bet Cohen's university classes are lively, stimulating ones to be in. This book is based on a course he has taught for more than 20 years in American and Israeli universities, and he prefaces it by saying that it's "not a whodunit," it doesn't affix blame on anyone for Jesus' death. Instead, it tries to shed light on why Christians have needed Jews as their scapegoats for Jesus' death and how this need has so strongly affected Western society in so many aspects: religion, philosophy, the arts and politics.

The story of the Crucifixion has always invoked strong passions. Cohen tracks how and why the Christ-killer myth has been perpetuated throughout history, culminating in Mel Gibson's film, *The Passion of the Christ*.

The award-winning author has divided his book into three parts. Part one digs into the origins of the Christ-killer myth, which begins with the Four Gospels of the New Testament: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Cohen compares those books to the Hebrew Bible, and to Jewish traditions that helped to sustain the story of the Crucifixion, and then jumps ahead to Melito of Sardis' poem, *On the Pascha*, which, Cohen says, set the historical precedent for forever vilifying the Jews as Christ-killers.

Part two cites the various discussions that have taken place throughout the ages on the subject – whether through ignorance or intent, through fable or fantasy – ending with the Vatican II's *Nostra Aetate* (Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions) published in 1965, a document that, basically, exonerated the Jews of condemnation, as a nation, for Jesus' death.

Part III analyzes the art, both visual and dramatic, and iconography that have had a dramatic influence on the Christ-killer myth. Then, in his conclusion, Cohen deals directly with Judas Iscariot.

This is a readable, somewhat academic text, peppered with artwork and offering many suggestions for further reading that ends with a fairly hefty bibliography.

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Recent CDs showcase diverse Jewish music

This selection of five recent CDs - all of them very good, all of them recommended - showcases the diversity of recent Jewish music.

David Buchbinder
Odessa/Havana
Tzadik
odessahavana.com

Klezmer musicians have long fused their music with music from other traditions and, on this fascinating collaboration, David Buchbinder, the trumpet player long associated with Toronto's Flying Bulgar Klezmer Band, teams up with Hilario Durán, a Cuban pianist now based in Toronto, for a set of imaginative compositions that draw on Jewish, Cuban and jazz influences.

Other than an extended piece called "Colaboración" that was co-written by both, these tunes were written by either Buchbinder or Durán and each composer draws on their musical background. For example, Cuban percussion patterns dominate Durán's "Rumba Judia" while the minor key melodies of cantorial music and Eastern European klezmer can be heard in Buchbinder's "Prayer."

That being said, it's wise not to jump to conclusions about who wrote certain compositions. Hearing Durán's "Freylekhs Tumbao," for example, tells me the Cuban pianist has been paying attention to klezmer music. As well, several pieces, including "Colaboración," tell me that both composers have taken lessons from the work of jazz composers like Charles Mingus.

Various Artists
Putumayo presents Israel
Putumayo World Music
tinyurl.com/2as42t

Reflecting the fact that it's a modern country with citizens who've emigrated from all over the world, Israel is a musically cosmopolitan country as evidenced by this 12-song sampler by various Israeli artists and groups.

"Mi Ma'amakim" by the Idan Raichel Project draws on Ethiopian music while Mosh Ben Ari's "Eem Rak Na'iz" blends Middle Eastern and Caribbean influences. David Broza's "Srochim" has a flamenco-meets-Paul Simon feel while Itay Pearl's "Chipopo" recalls the Brazilian bossa nova of Antonio Carlos Jobim.

Frank London
A Night in the Old Marketplace
Soundbrush Records
soundbrush.com

This collection of 21 songs composed and conducted by Frank London, with lyrics by Glen Berger, and vocal and instrumental contributions by an array of great singers and musicians, was created for Alexandra Aron's theatrical adaptation of I.L. Peretz's Yiddish story *A Night in the Old Marketplace*, a phantasmagorical ghost story that draws on Jewish folkloric legends.

London's musical interpretation of *A Night in the Old Marketplace* is a kind of klezmer-folk-jazz opera. To appreciate the nuances, without actually seeing it on stage, you'll want to pay attention to the brief notes in the CD booklet for



Jewish Music

Michael Regensstreif

each song and follow the lyric sheet as you listen to some amazing performances by such vocalists as Lorin Sklamberg, Susan McKeown, Manu Narayan, Joanne Borts and a chorus of Martha Cluver, Karen Goldfeder, Silvie Jensen, Matt Hensrud and Steve Hrycelak.

This is a highly ambitious project; London and company succeed marvelously.

Yale Strom & Hot Pstromi
Borsht with Bread, Brothers
Arc Music Productions
yalestrom.com

Many of the bands in the contemporary klezmer revival have been inspired by the music of the first generation immigrant musicians who came through Ellis Island from Eastern Europe in the great wave of Jewish immigration in the early decades of the 20th century. But violinist Yale Strom and his band Hot Pstromi take a different tack on this passionate and spellbinding CD and play tunes and songs Strom has collected from largely unknown Jewish and Roma musicians he's met on collecting trips to Eastern Europe over the past 26 years.

Many Jewish and Roma musicians worked together in Eastern Europe over the past 200 years. They exchanged

tunes and played in each other's bands. Both Jewish and Roma traditions run through many of the pieces heard on this CD.

Among the highlights on the disc is "Stol A Kakos Mar," a Chassidic song from Hungary sung in Hungarian and Hebrew, with a vocal performance reminiscent of Edith Piaf from Hot Pstromi singer Elizabeth Schwartz, and "Vemen Veln Mir Dinen, Brider," a Yiddish protest song that laments being forced to serve in the czar's army. This is a very special klezmer album.

Sisters of Sheynville
Sheynville Express
Sisters of Sheynville - independent release
sistersofsheynville.ca

The Sisters of Sheynville are an all-woman, Toronto-based band fronted by singers Lenka Lichtenberg and Isabel Frysberg who are reviving the Yiddish-swing music of the 1930s and '40s popularized by the Barry Sisters.

The "Sisters" do a great job on familiar Yiddish folk and theatre songs like "Yidl mitn Fidl," "Di Grine Kuzine" and "Ooh, Mama! Bin ikh Farlibt!" The singing and the swinging playing are lots of fun.

But my favourite songs on this CD are the campy adaptations of a couple of songs from outside anyone's Yiddish repertoire. The Sisters of Sheynville take Johnny Mercer's faux-cowboy song, "I'm an Old Cow Hand," and give it a female, Jewish, vegan, Toronto spin. Their old cowhand isn't from the Rio Grande, she's from the corner of Bathurst and Grand. Then they take "Blues Stay Away From Me," the old Delmore Brothers country song, and turn it into a very funny Yiddish-English kvetch. Their transformations of these two songs beg favourable comparisons with the legendary Mickey Katz's parodies from half a century ago.

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I tell you, it's funny being Jewish

I'm Jewish you know.

I have been laughing ever since I found out. My first day at school, one of my classmates told me I was a dirty Jew, so I went home and told my mother I needed a bath. Would he lie to me?

What is it about Jews that makes us so funny? And by funny, I mean *funny*.

It's right in our religion.

The proof of our sense of the absurd is that God created the universe on the first day of the seventh month. That's right. Tishrei, the month of Rosh Hashanah, is the seventh month. Apparently, either God has a sense of humour and was playing lucky sevens, or slept in. Time waits for no man or, apparently, for God either. This is also because God had no Jewish parent to wake him up and say, "Hurry up or you'll be late for creation!"

Speaking of new years, we as Jews also celebrate a new year for the seasons in Nissan and a new year in Shevat for plants. We are just party animals.

Just ask the rabbi about the shnapps he has hidden under the bimah on Simchat Torah, which is also a sort of new year.

But, when it comes to animals, things do not seem to be fair.

We celebrate the new year not for the animals but for the



Humour me, please

Rubin Friedman

tithing of the animals, which is basically when we decide what animals are ready to be sacrificed. This is a happy occasion? OK, OK the silver lining is that this is the day when a horse learns whether he will race as a two-year-old or three-year-old. You can bet on it.

Then we have these strange stories.

Cain sits on his brother Abel's head everywhere he goes and, one day, when God sees him alone, he asks him where Abel is. "What, am I my brother's kippah?" Cain says.

Abraham talks to God and, because, in his ancient city of Ur, the barber pole was a sign of both hair cutting and holiness, he goes in and says, "I'd like a little off the top."

A few hours later, he comes out and exclaims, "I thought I was getting a haircut!"

He was surprised and disappointed at the same time. He

was so angry he destroyed all the idols.

Then we have Moses who also talks to God. Moses was a good talker in defending Jews, but he didn't understand God's instructions that well. This is because, as a Sephardi Jew from Egypt, he didn't speak Yiddish. God says ask the rock for water, and Moses goes and smashes the rock.

So Moses says, "Hey, anyone can make a little mistake. It's not like I'm gonna lose a chance to go to the Promised Land over it!"

Later, God says to all the Israelites, "Everyone going to the Promised Land take one step forward ... Not so fast Moses!"

And Moses was a modest and humble guy. Like when Moses talks to God and says, "You want me to do what? 613 commandments? That's a little harsh. Listen, I don't think I can handle 613, but could you give me your top 10? As long as they're not written in stone ... Oy, my head is spinning."

So God says, "Here, take two tablets ..."

Which is how we got to be the way we are.

When Moses died, God took him and placed him with flaming seraphs in his holy throne, which is a very warm place. And this is why, still today, Jews go to Florida in the winter.

Which, as I say, proves how funny it is to be Jewish.

On the road in Ontario and New York state

To spice things up, we decided to take Knish on the road. With Byron driving and Paul in the back seat, we went to Toronto to attend a YouTube party and discovered there are bigger nerds than us. We had a memorable night at the Crowne Plaza Toronto Don Valley mapping out our New York State trip.

Forever, we've been giant fans of the NBC Rochester newscaster Janet Lomax. We grew up watching Janet, always wanting to meet her. We called her office and, shockingly, Janet answered. (They really need caller ID.)

We told her we're huge fans and asked to stop by the station to say "hey." Janet was extremely sweet, a touch scared, but welcomed our visit.

We had a big day ahead: Toronto, Buffalo, Rochester and then Syracuse. Byron said we needed to be up at 7:30 am.

Paul is not a morning person. So, as revenge, when Byron fell asleep, he poured Tropicana Twister in his ear. Byron woke up, freaked out and we fought. Picture the hotel scene when Borat and his producer almost kill each other.

The next morning, it hit us. We weren't far from the

Strub's Pickles headquarters.

We had e-mailed with Arnold Strub, president of Strub Brothers Limited. He said if we were ever in the area to drop by. People always say this to be friendly, rarely expecting two idiots to actually show up.

We decided to take up Arnold's generous offer. We grew very excited as we got close. We walked in. Immediately, the smell of fresh pickles hit us, causing some delirium.

An inside joke is that Byron asks Paul to take photos of him posing with things. Out walked Arnold Strub - the Man, the Legend! The first thing Paul said was, "B, take a picture of me and Arnie."

Awkward laughter followed. We went into Arnold's office. He was extremely warm, and told us that his father Leo was golfing. He must have heard we were coming.

Leo's grandparents, Sophie and Michael Strub, started making pickles in their Hamilton kitchen with the same family recipes used today. We met Arnie's brother Marty, vice-president production. Their other brother Andy is vice-president sales.

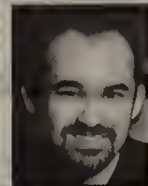
Arnold was great and even gave us a Strub's hat. He then handed us white lab coats, hair nets and ear plugs for a plant tour. We have a feeling the ear plugs were mostly to block us out. Employees making sauerkraut were surrounded by endless barrels of pickles in all stages from the locally grown cucumbers to the final product in different-sized containers. The equipment was extremely sharp; you could perform a bris in there.

The plant was impressive (although it doesn't take a lot to impress us) and Arnold gave us a huge jar of pickles for the road. We promised him we'd never return and drove off. Paul kept his hair net on for the trip's duration.

We went from Brantford to Niagara Falls, and then to the American border near Buffalo. When we drove by what we thought was a border booth, we handed the woman our passports. She said "Uhh, its \$2.50, Honey. This isn't the border."



Paul Telner



Byron Pascoe

Have a Knish

When we got to the border, they saw Byron driving and Paul sitting in the back holding a huge jar of pickles. Does this get any more Jewish?

The border guard asked, "Whose your friend back there?"

Byron replied "He's a diva."

They then asked for our trip's purpose. In unison we responded, "To meet our idol, the lovely Janet Lomax!"

We drove into downtown Buffalo, took a major wrong turn and ended up in an extremely shady area. Pulling down the window and asking, "Where's the JCC? We're the knish guys!" wasn't the best idea.

A miracle happened! We somehow drove by Buffalo's JCC. We walked in and told the front desk that we're members of the club.

He asked, "What club?" We said, "Ya know, we're Jews!" He gave us a weird look. We said we're from Ottawa and needed a little help. For some reason, they thought we wanted to buy Buffalo JCC memberships.

They called Nick Miller who gave us a full JCC tour. We walked around the facilities; possibly one of the dumbest moments of our lives thus far. He kept telling us how there was a girl at the pool who looks exactly like Pamela Anderson. Unless Nick is permanently blind, she didn't look a thing like Pam. He then showed us the bathrooms. Why?

Paul started laughing and looked at Byron who thought, "I should have gone to law school. What the hell am I doing with my life?"

Nick advised us on Buffalo's nightlife, convinced we were moving to town. He gave us JCC application forms to fill out. Their recruitment tactics are much more forceful than the Soloway JCC.



The Knish boys tour Strub's factory with Arnold Strub.

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Continued on page 28

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In memory of:

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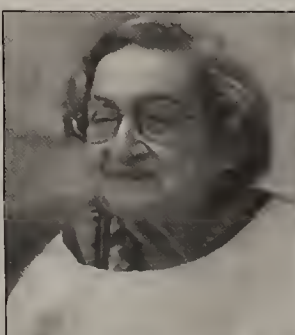
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Savouring a life, The Byrtha Leckie Memorial Fund

For Winnipeg-born Byrtha Leckie, being Jewish was a very important part of her life. She was a strong supporter of Jewish education and heritage and she helped found the Ottawa Modern Jewish School where she sent all her children and was the school's registrar for five decades. She was also treasurer of the Ottawa Jewish Historical Society for many years and a fierce defender of Israel. Byrtha and her family delighted in Shabbat dinners, Jewish festivals and holy days almost as much as they savoured her unsurpassed chicken soup.

When it came to birthdays and anniversaries, in lieu of gifts Byrtha would request a contribution to a charity in her name. So when Byrtha died, her husband Leon and family wanted to commemorate her life by contributing to a worthy cause that would benefit Ottawa's Jewish community where she had lived since 1949. Consequently, they opened the Byrtha Leckie Memorial Fund with the Ottawa Jewish Community Foundation (OJCF) as a fitting and lasting tribute to her.

Learning and helping the needy were very important to Byrtha and, because of this, Jewish Family Services of Ottawa is the beneficiary agency of her fund since it helps Jewish families in need. Her family



Byrtha Leckie

hopes that the fund will assist a young person who wants to pursue higher education or elderly Jews needing help.

The Leckie family also feels that each contribution made to Byrtha's fund will act as a reminder of her. This will be her legacy to the Jewish community of Ottawa, as she would have wished.

To discuss how you can open a fund to commemorate a loved one, call Francine Paulin, Foundation Associate at 613.798.4696 extension 252 or email fpaulin@jewishottawa.com. www.OJCF.ca.

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The Jewish Americans:

PBS documentary offers excellent website

Last month, Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) in the United States aired *The Jewish Americans*, a six-hour documentary about how Jews have fared in the United States since 23 Jewish refugees, fleeing the Inquisition, arrived from Brazil in 1654.

The series was modelled on a similar series, *The Irish in America*, which aired a decade ago. Both the Irish and the Jews have had their ups and downs as the tensions between the opportunities offered in the new land and the nativistic suspicion of newcomers worked itself out.

PBS created an excellent website to augment *The Jewish Americans* and I'm devoting this column to exploring the site and to pointing out other sites that refer to the series and supplement it.

Bulletin readers, particularly those who missed the series, or a particular episode, might want to start by reading the excellent reviews offered by the *Washington Post* and *Newsday*.

There's also a *New York Times* blog with an ongoing discussion providing reaction to the series and to its slant on how Jews reacted to the relative openness of American society, and on how Judaism in America has defined itself in the variety of ways in which it has, and is, practised.

The Jewish Americans website, itself, is straightforward and easy to navigate.

Let's start with the video section, which offers short video clips organized by major themes including migration, assimilation, economic opportunity, anti-Semitism, Jews in sports and entertainment, and responses to the Holocaust and the State of Israel.

Two of the video sections, on Jewish American political



Global Shtetl The Jewish Internet

Saul Silverman

activism, and on the variety of choices and challenges in being Jewish in contemporary America, go beyond the theme of historical memories and highlight questions relevant to the ongoing future of Jews in America.

The "Jewish Life in America" area of the site provides a series of texts organized in the same way as the videos, but the perspective is somewhat different. Each section opens with one or two paragraphs that summarize the theme.

At the bottom of the section's web page there are leads to a handful of subtopics. A few of these are simply another way of accessing the relevant video, but most offer access to excerpts from the companion book that was written for the series.

Don't miss the "Share Your Story" part of the website. This section continues to develop and includes stories of individuals and families from viewers, including family recipes, stories about how families came to the United States and what they experienced there and about family traditions.

A special subsection, "A Tree of Life," provides users with an introduction to developing their own family's genealogy.

The Jewish Americans website provides an overview of some major themes in the experience of Jews in America and a take on contemporary Jewish life that emphasizes widening opportunities for Jews in their daily life and a pluralistic approach to the challenges of how Judaism is perceived and practised.

The Jewish Americans should lead some viewers and users of the website to further exploration of the history of Jews in America and to reconsider the future of Jews and Judaism in an open society.

To aid in further exploration on the topic, the website

offers a section on other web resources on American Jewish history and life.

An additional site that I recommend for a more comprehensive and conventional view of the history of American Jews is *Jews in America: Our History*, prepared by the Center for Jewish History for the 350th anniversary of American Jewry in 2005.

Websites

PBS *The Jewish Americans*: tinyurl.com/29z9od

Washington Post: tinyurl.com/3bin9ly

Newsday: tinyurl.com/378ano

New York Times blog: tinyurl.com/2nthem

Jews in America – Our History: tinyurl.com/3xzlv2

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10 things that never let you down

There are certain things in life that you can always count on to lift your spirits and deliver satisfaction as promised.

For me, they would include a hug from my children, baking something new and sharing it with those I love, buying fresh tulips, lying in the hammock at the cottage with a great book, receiving a parcel (even if it is something I ordered for myself online) and getting my stubborn gray hair coloured. (Oops, a bit too much information there!)

When it comes to culinary matters, I have my favourite foods and products that always taste and function as intended. Here then, in no particular order, is my top 10 list of never fail kitchen items I can always count on.

1. In 1996, Del Monte introduced Gold Pineapples, and shopping for pineapples became a no-brainer. Although the gold variety commands a premium price over regular pineapples, there is just no comparison. Gold pineapples have a consistently sweet flavour, bright golden colour and juicy texture.

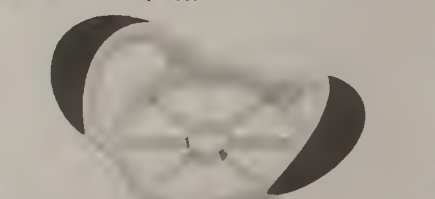
2. The one knife I reach for most often is my Santoku knife. Santoku knives originated in Japan and the word in Japanese means "three virtues." These knives range in size from five to seven inches in blade length. They have an extremely comfortable well-balanced grip and an amazingly sharp edge. The blade has a scalloped pattern (known as "granton edge"), which helps to release thin slices and sticky foods after slicing. It is my go-to knife for almost all slicing and dicing tasks.



3. One of my favourite comfort foods is a grilled cheese sandwich made with Buffalo Mozzarella. Mozzarella di Bufala Campana is a fresh mozzarella cheese made from Buffalo milk. Until recently, it was only being made in Italy, but now a Vancouver firm, Natural Pastures, is making it in Canada. Unfortunately, they do not ship out of province. For now, you'll have to settle on imported. I usually buy mine at Farm Boy. It is expensive (about \$7.00 for one ball), but, once

you taste it, you'll never again go back to the rubbery bocconcini (cow's milk mozzarella) sold in the supermarket.

4. For making my grilled cheese sandwiches, I love my Panini Press. A panini is the Italian name for a certain kind of sandwich that is cooked on a special grill or press. It allows the outside of the sandwich to develop a crisp toasted crust, while the inside centre becomes all warm and melted. For an amazing sandwich, layer thinly sliced Buffalo Mozzarella, sliced tomatoes, whole fresh basil leaves, salt, pepper and a drizzle of olive oil between two slices of any good bread (I love it on Ace Bakery multi-grain or their white oval organic bread). Preheat the panini press and cook for about 3-4 minutes. You will be very happy!



5. Anyone who has ever worn braces remembers that it is impossible to bite into an apple. In our house, we love the OXO Good Grips Apple Corer and Divider. In one fell swoop, it cores and divides the apple into eight equal wedges. Simplicity at its best. It's also great for making apple pies and crisps. You just have to peel the apple first.

6. The new President's Choice Easy Peel Dry Roasted Almonds in the Shell has made snacking in our house more fun. You get all the freshness of almonds in the shell without the hassle of having to use a nutcracker. Just squeeze gently between your fingers and the almond pops out - already salted! How do they do that?

7. Chipotle Chile Powder (from www.chillychiles.com) makes everything more delicious. On the chili scale, chipotles are about a five out of 10. Where zero is no heat and 10 is maximum pain, a rating of five means things are just starting to get warm. I use it anywhere chile powder is called for. It's also great rubbed on chicken or fish for grilling. Recently, I



Made with Love

Cindy Feingold

used it in a chicken salad. Dice 2 cooked chicken breasts. Add 2 sliced green onions, 2 stalks of celery, diced and 1/4 cup chopped toasted almonds. Make a dressing from 3 tablespoons light mayonnaise, 1 tablespoon lemon juice and 1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon chipotle chile powder. Toss with chicken and season with salt and pepper. Tastes great stuffed into a pita.

8. While this next one has nothing to do with food, I just have to share it with you anyway. Yves Saint Laurent Touche Éclat Radiant Touch is a beauty product designed to banish dark shadows and signs of fatigue under the eyes. It works like a dream covering up under eye circles without looking cakey. It's available at Holt Renfrew and costs about \$45. While admittedly expensive, can you really put a price on looking fresh and alert?

9. For ease in baking, you really can't beat Parchment Paper. I find the rolls they sell in the supermarket really annoying. I could never get the ends to lie flat, they keep rolling up. I solved this problem by buying my parchment paper in large sheets at Tannis Food Distributors (288 Catherine Street, across from the bus station). The only drawback is they sell it in boxes of 1,000 sheets for \$91. If you bake often, it is a worthwhile investment. You'll use up a box in about a year.

10. My final kitchen item that never lets me down is my Instant Read Thermometer. It comes in handy when you are roasting meat or chicken or even baking bread. Bread is fully baked when it reaches an internal temperature of 190 degrees F. Take the guesswork out of barbecuing and use your thermometer at the grill as well. Beef is rare at 125 degrees F, and medium at 140 degrees F. Chicken breasts are done at an internal temperature of 160 degrees F and dark meat at 175 degrees F. When placing the thermometer into a thin piece of meat, like a steak, remember to insert it horizontally from the edge into the centre of the meat, so that most of the thermometer is inserted into the steak.

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Practising Judaism secretly during the Spanish Inquisition

The Boy from Seville

By Dorit Orgad

Translated by Sondra Silverston

Illustrations by Avi Katz

Kar-Ben Publishing 2007

200 pp. Ages 10 – 13

Winner of Italy's Verghereto Award in 2006 for the best children's book of the year, *The Boy from Seville* is a chilling, thought-provoking historical novel set in Spain in the early 17th century. Written in Hebrew in 1984, and only recently translated into English, the book provides insight into the relentless pursuit of *conversos* during the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions.

Conversos, loosely referred to as 'New Christians,' included Jews, Moors and others who had converted to Roman Catholicism under duress during the 356 years of the Spanish Inquisition's reign of terror from 1478 to 1834. Thousands of Jews who considered Spain and Portugal their homelands, converted.

Some *conversos* and their descendants became devout Catholics. Others were Catholic in public, but practised Judaism secretly. It was this latter group, the secret Jews, who eventually became the prime target of the Inquisition and its numerous henchmen and spies in both Spain and Portugal. Those secret Jews were also called *Marranos* by the Inquisition, a derogatory term meaning swine.

During the time frame portrayed in *The Boy from Seville*, the Portuguese Inquisition was especially ruthless in persecuting *conversos*. Many former Spanish Jewish families, who had fled to Portugal before 1532 when its Inquisition began, now saw Spain as a safer place and returned.

That is the background for this dramatic and absorbing story about 12-year-old Manuel Nunez and his family. Although the Nunez family had been recognized as Christians for several generations, they were practising Jews who made every effort to observe Shabbat, the holidays, Jewish laws and traditions.

Even before Uncle Alonso's disappearance, but particularly afterward, life for the Nunez family meant constantly looking over their shoulders, constantly being on alert and doing so as inconspicuously as possible. The family knew, only too



Kid Lit

Deanna Silverman

well, that if the Inquisition accused someone of being a Jew, and if that person failed to prove his or her devotion to Catholicism, punishment could range from imprisonment and torture to being burned at the stake.

Told by Manuel, with an eerie sense of lost innocence, *The Boy from Seville* is an exciting adventure story full of intrigue, near misses, twists, turns, young love and eventual escape. Along the way, readers learn intricate ways of hiding their Jewishness, avoiding and evading enemies and the dangers of making new friends.

The story begins in mid-stream with Manuel hiding a chicken under his tunic to take it to the kosher slaughterer. In a way, this is Manuel's coming-of-age act, for he has only recently been let in on the secret of the family being Jewish. His four-year-old younger brother, Juan, still doesn't know; nor does Uncle Alonso's daughter.

Manuel is proud to be Jewish and even prouder to share the family secret. Theoretically, Manuel knows it will be difficult to live up to his responsibilities as a secret Jew and a public Catholic. But he is only now beginning to realize how stressful that is in everyday life.

And if the stress of Manuel's routine activities weren't enough, add in his growing relationship with his neighbour, Violanti, whose older sister is being pursued by the Inquisition, and peer pressure on Manuel to help find that sister. Now mix in the horrors of the Black Plague, the obvious attraction between Manuel's older sister and a Catholic tutor who may, or may not, be a spy, and having to sit in church listening to the vilest of anti-Semitic sermons.

Some of the social mores mentioned in the story, such as the necessity for adult supervision when unrelated boys and girls spend time together, may seem unusual to modern readers. However, such details reflect the time-setting of the book. Also reflective of the book's time and place are its descriptions of the abject poverty and outcast status of the Moors, as exemplified by Manuel's friend, Aldino.

The Boy from Seville is a terrific fictional introduction to one of the darkest periods of Sephardic Jewish history. Comparisons with Holocaust times are unavoidable and would make for lively discussions.



By Dorit Orgad; translated by Sondra Silverston; illustrated by Avi Katz

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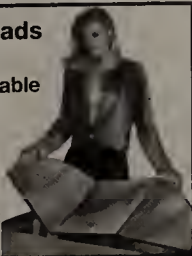
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What's happening this Winter at Congregation Beth Shalom

Tuesday, March 4

Thursday, March 6

Friday, March 7

Thursday, April 3

Friday, April 11

Sunday, April 13

Book Club

Kibitz Club Luncheon

Shabbat Dinner

Kibitz Club Luncheon

Shabbat Dinner

Talk with Esty Mayer, Holocaust Suite

Watch for the date to be announced for our Beer Tasting event!

Everyone is Welcome!

For more information, please contact the synagogue at
613-789-3501 or info@bethshalom.ca
www.bethshalom.ca

WHAT'S GOING ON

February 18 to March 9, 2008

For a detailed listing
visit www.jewishottawa.org



MONDAY, FEBRUARY 18
Naomi Bulka Memorial Blood
Donor Clinic, 1575 Carling
Avenue, 8:00 am - 1:00 pm.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 19
Israeli Folkdancing, Hillel
Academy, 31 Nadelny Sachs Private,
6:30 pm. Also Tuesday,
March 4.



CANDLELIGHTING BEFORE

Feb 22 ☆ 5:21 pm
Feb 29 ☆ 5:31 pm
Mar 7 ☆ 5:41 pm

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 20
Hillel Academy Open House,
Hillel Academy, 31 Nadelny Sachs
Private, 9:00 am - 3:30 pm.

Jewish Family Services and
Congregation Agudath Israel,
Let's Do Lunch and Name That
Tune with Sherwyn Lyman, Agudath
Israel Congregation, 1400
Coldrey Avenue, noon.

Ottawa College of Jewish
Studies, Talmud Skills for
Women, Part 1, weekly seminars
with instructor Rabbi Ely M.
Braun, noon. Continues on February
27, March 5.

Soloway Jewish Community
Centre, Annual General Meeting,
7:00 pm.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 21
Ottawa College of Jewish
Studies and Soloway Jewish
Community Centre, Topics in
Modern Jewish History weekly
seminars, with Rabbi Ely M.
Braun, director, 12:15 pm. Continues
February 28.

OJHS presents the Artword
Theatre production "If Cows
Could Fly, Growing Up Jewish In
Smiths Falls," a musical play, Irving
Greenberg Theatre Centre,
1233 Wellington Street West. Continues
to March 9.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 24
Jewish Ottawa South, Ice
Skating Party at Rideau Hall,
5:30 pm.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 25
Israeli Folkdancing, Hillel
Academy, 31 Nadelny Sachs Private,
6:30 pm.

AJA 50+, "Enjoying Retirement
to the Fullest: Social and
Emotional Transitions," seminar
on learning how to get the most
out of retirement, with Sarah
Bercler, 7:00 pm.

SATURDAY, MARCH 1
Yitzhak Rabin High School
Bar Mitzvah Celebration, 7:00 pm.
Soloway Jewish Community

Centre, Youth Department, Mix
4/5/6/7 Games & Movie Night,
7:30 pm.

Interfaith Event, "The Final
Wake Up Call," guest speakers
H.E. Alan Baker, Israeli ambassador
to Canada; The Hon. Jason Kenney,
secretary of state for Multiculturalism
and Canadian Identity; and Rev. Majed
Shatle, president and founder
One Free World International,
Congregation Machzikei Hadas,
2310 Virginia Drive, 7:30 pm.

SUNDAY, MARCH 2
Israel @ 60 Concert and Shira
B'tzibur with Mickey Lewin from
Toronto, 7:30 pm.

MONDAY, MARCH 3
JET, Lawyers Lunch and
Learn, "The Ten Commandments,"
Gowings, 160 Elgin
Street, 26th Floor, noon

TUESDAY, MARCH 4
Friends of Simon Wiesenthal

Centre, Daniel Pipes, National
Arts Centre, Panorama Room, 53
Elgin Street, 7:00 pm.

Congregation Beth Shalom
Book Club, "Miriam's Kitchen: A
Memoir" by Elizabeth Ehrlich,
7:30 pm.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5
The College of Jewish Studies
and the Soloway Jewish
Community Centre, Is God Close
or Far Away? Jewish Spirituality,
with Elliot Malamet, 7:30 pm.

Jewish Federation of Ottawa
Guys Night Out, with Montreal
comedian Phil Shuchat, Velvet
Room, 62 1/2 York Street,
8:30 pm.

THURSDAY, MARCH 6
Jewish Family Services and
Congregation Beth Shalom, The
Kibbutz Club, a senior's luncheon
program with entertainment,
151 Chapel Street, noon.

The Soloway Jewish Community
Centre and Cheo Foundation
present a Gala Evening, "Evila,"
National Arts Centre, 5:30 pm.
cocktails, 8:00 pm. performance,
and post performance cast party.

SATURDAY, MARCH 8
SJCC Youth Department,
Movie Night, 7:30 pm.
B'nai Brith Youth Organization,
"Hypnotist Dave Hallett,"
8:00 pm.

COMING SOON

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19
Ottawa Folk Festival, Klezmer concert with Shtreiml,
National Arts Centre Fourth Stage, 7:30 pm.
Tickets: NAC box office (in person no service charge),
or 613-755-1111 or www.ticketmaster.ca.

Unless otherwise noted, activities take place at The Joseph and Rose Ages Family Building, 21 Nadelny Sachs Private.

This information is taken from the community calendar maintained by the Jewish Community Campus of Ottawa Inc. Organizations which would like their events to be listed, no matter where they are to be held, should make sure they are recorded by Benita Siemiatycki, calendar coordinator at 613-798-4696 ext. 227. We have voice mail. Accurate details must be provided and all events must be open to the Jewish public. You may fax to 798-4695 or email to bsiemiatycki@jewishottawa.com.



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(brother of Edie Landau)

Ernie Gross, Toronto
(father of Barbara Rother)

May her memory be a blessing always.

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FEBRUARY 20 FOR MARCH 10
MARCH 5 FOR MARCH 24
MARCH 19 FOR APRIL 7
APRIL 2 FOR APRIL 21
APRIL 16 FOR MAY 5
APRIL 30 FOR MAY 19
MAY 28 FOR JUNE 16
JULY 2 FOR JULY 21

* Community-wide Issue (all dates subject to change)

Readers and advertisers are advised the next edition
of the **Ottawa Jewish Bulletin**
will be published on **Monday, March 10, 2008.**
The deadline date is **Wednesday, February 20, 2008.**